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## EDITORIAL NOTE

Preliminary steps have been taken towards the organization of the Inter-American Academy. This is an international institution of the Americas, founded to foster better understanding and cooperation through cultural exchange between scholars, teachers, writers, and leaders of the Western Hemisphere. With its honorary membership, it will recognize the achievements of the great leaders who have helped to advance friendship and cooperation among the peoples of the American republics. With its ordinary membership, it will honor citizens of the Americas who have made notable contributions in their respective professions to promote the cultural, economic, and social advance of their countries. With its corresponding membership it will recognize individuals in all parts of the world for their outstanding contributions in the inter-American field.

The editors believe that a private organization, made up of individuals rather than representatives of official organizations, can play an important part in the cooperation required to attain the above objectives among the peoples of the American republics.

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## STYLE IN 18th CENTURY MEXICO\*

Joseph A. Baird, Jr.

Of the 18th Century, a 19th century critic remarked that it mated decadence with splendor<sup>1</sup> — a poetically conceived evaluation, but one which introduces more than aesthetic judgment. From the time of Sylvester Baxter's pioneer appreciation of art and architecture in colonial Mexico,<sup>2</sup> there have been a great variety of travellers and scholars who have attempted to clarify the stylistic problems of the period. It would be impossible to give any just measure of credit to all those who have contributed; much of the most meaningful interpretation of this period, however, must be based on the brilliant work of the late Manuel Tous-

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\*The material in this article is, in part, based on a paper delivered at the Symposium on Mexican Art held April 17-21, 1958 at the University of Michigan. I would like to express my appreciation to Professor Harold Wethey and Mr. Charles Sawyer for making that paper possible. Justino Fernández has been kind enough to read the present article before publication.

<sup>1</sup>In Manuel G. Revilla, *El Arte en México en la Epoca Antigua y durante el Gobierno Virreinal*, México, Oficina Tipográfica de la Secretaría de Fomento, 1893; also quoted on p. 23 of Baxter (see following note).

<sup>2</sup>Sylvester Baxter, *Spanish Colonial Architecture in Mexico* (Photographs by Henry Peabody and measured drawings by Bertram G. Goodhue), Boston, J. B. Millet, 1901. 1 v. text, 9 v. plates. There is a Spanish translation of Baxter's text, with abridgements, by Manuel Toussaint *et al.*, Mexico, 1934. Baxter's admirably sympathetic and perceptive study was one of the earliest important works in English. His intuitions have, in some cases, been well justified by fact; indeed, Mexican colonial architecture even now needs such intuitions. Unfortunately, Baxter's knowledge of Spanish architecture was incomplete and some of his general observations seem rather obvious today. His great contribution was in viewing a vast amount of exotic material with a comparative understanding rare in his time — and in making possible Henry Peabody's superb corpus of photographs, from which anyone can learn a great deal.

saint and the *investigadores* of the Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas at the University of Mexico.<sup>3</sup>

Terminology has been perhaps the most constant and immediate problem of communication. There have been coined phrases such as Ultra-Baroque, Mannerist-Baroque, Barococo, etc.; and there is the maddeningly vague, but ponderable presence of Mexican Churrigueresque.<sup>4</sup> It is difficult to resolve this dilemma consistently. My own interests are in the church retables<sup>5</sup> and façades of this period, since they embody the principal style changes and receive the largest share of attention from the major designers. In this area of ornamental architecture, one can study the most important changes of the 18th century.

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<sup>3</sup>A bibliography of the publications of Manuel Toussaint (1890-1955) was published as supplement no. 1 to number 25 (1957) of the *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas*. Justino Fernández published a catalogue of the publications of the Instituto and an index to the *Anales* as supplement no. 2 to this number (25) which honored Toussaint's extraordinary contributions to Mexican scholarship, and to the Instituto which he founded.

<sup>4</sup>As has been often pointed out, it seems impossible to break the stranglehold which this term has on both the popular and the scholarly imagination. R. C. Taylor, "Francisco Hurtado and His School," *Art Bulletin*, March, 1950, XXXII, no. 1, p. 28, note 28, suggested that the term Churrigueran be applied to work directly influenced by José de Churriguera the Younger, from whose name the Churrigueresque descends. The most serious drawback of the term Churrigueresque is that it implies an ancestry of eastern and north-western Spain (Barcelona and Salamanca, essentially) for the work of 18th century Mexico. The actual background of late colonial Mexico is Sevilla and Granada, plus an indefinably complex heritage of sources outside Spain; there is an augmented enthusiasm in the colony for formal devices (such as the *estipite*) which are never so richly developed in Spain. Churrigueresque seems to have appeared in Spain contemporaneous with José de Churriguera the Younger, for Juan Caramuel had pointed out in 1678 that the "Churrigueresque" should be judged by its own laws; only José Caveda (*Ensayo sobre la Arquitectura Española*, 1848) concurred with this same view-point in the 19th century, which tended to criticize all of 17th and 18th century design. See García y Bellido, "Estudios del barroco español", *Archivo Español de Arte y Arqueología*, V, 1929, p. 835, and Elizabeth Wilder Weissmann, *Mexico in Sculpture*, Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard University Press, 1950, pp. 212-213 for further discussions of Churrigueresque.

<sup>5</sup>In Spanish, retable—the great screen behind an altar (*retrotabula*); the principal retable, behind the high altar, is the *retablo mayor*. In Mexico, retables behind the altars in transepts (which are, of course, often mere reveals rather than the deep transepts of the medieval period) and in the nave are usually called *colaterales*; they attain as great a size and are as important foci of design as the *retablo mayor*. There is confusion possible both in Spanish (since small votive paintings of the 19th and 20th century are called *retablos*) and in English (since the Anglican church refers to a retable, or shelf, behind the altar).

In this area, too, one can partially resolve the dilemma of terminology in terms of the type of articulating element; from 1700-1735, retable and facade design is dominated by the Salomonic<sup>6</sup> or twisted column; from 1735-1775, it is dominated by the *estípite*;<sup>7</sup> from 1775-1790, the ornamental niche-pilaster<sup>8</sup> gradually supplants the *estípite* as principal articulating element; after 1790, the classicizing column returns to popularity. On such a basis of distinction, the term Mexican Churrigueresque should be confined to the period from 1735-1790, essentially during the rise and fall of the *estípite* as articulating element and the attendant emphasis on the ornamental niche-pilaster. Mexican Baroque (read, more exactly, Mannerist-Baroque) is, in general usage, synonymous with this; Ultra-Baroque is virtually meaningless for anyone who must relate Mexico to Europe. There is almost no understanding at the present, among English writers on this period, of the incredibly

<sup>6</sup>The Salomonic column (supposedly used in Solomon's temple) was popularized by the great Baroque designers; it has, however, a considerable currency from late Roman times through the medieval period. Marqués de Lozoya, *Historia del Arte Hispánico*, Barcelona, Salvat Editores, 1945, IV, pp. 148 ff., discusses its use in Spain after 1500. The twisted column does not have any importance in Mexico until the very end of the 17th century; there are no Salomonic (or *Salomónica*) retables in Mexico to compare in splendor with those of Sevilla or those of Churrigera in Salamanca.

<sup>7</sup>A Mannerist-inspired columnar or pilaster form made up of a special group of parts (an inverted obelisk, various blocks and medallions, a Corinthianesque capital, etc.), making the *estípite* a new "order". The word is apparently derived from the Latin: *stipes*, *stipitis*. Although there are significant proto-*estípites* that occur in much of 16th century Italian and Northern Mannerist design, the developed *estípite* is a peculiarly southern Spanish and Mexican phenomenon. See Joseph Baird, "The 18th Century Retables of the Bajío, Mexico: The Querétaro Style", *Art Bulletin*, September, 1953, XXXV, no. 3, p. 196, note 6. Víctor Manuel Villegas, *El Gran Signo Formal del Barroco; Ensayo Histórico del Apoyo Estípite*, México, Imprenta Universitaria, 1956, is a monumental pictorial summation of the *estípite* in history, although it tends to include examples that are irrelevant to Spain and Mexico in the 18th Century.

<sup>8</sup>A term which I have coined in order to describe the non-tectonic character of late 18th century design, when the formal articulation of twisted column or *estípite* is superseded by articulation with an elaborately ornamented niche which assumes the character of a pseudo-pilaster; see Joseph Baird, "The Ornamental Niche-Pilaster in the Hispanic World", *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, March, 1956, XV, no. 1, pp. 5-11. Diego Angulo Iniguez calls them *inter-estípites*; this term, however, means less when there are no *estípites* present, as in certain late 18th century works; Francisco de la Maza prefers the term *anastilos* (without columns) to describe the predominantly ornamental articulation of the period after 1775.

complex European and native sources of various local styles in the 18th century; it is perhaps impossible to ever expect such understanding.

I should like in this present article to examine, first, certain general characteristics of a period historically delimited by the completion of the Retablo de los Reyes in Mexico City Cathedral (1737) and the dedication of a great mining church of the north, San Cayetano de la Valenciana (1788), and then go on to a detailed analysis of a group of important church façades, which may give a more accurate picture of a still misunderstood era.

Santayana wrote, in the *Middle Span*; "Baroque and rococo cannot be foreign to a Spaniard. They are profoundly congenial and Quixotic, suspended as it were between two contrary insights: that in the service of love and imagination nothing can be too lavish, too sublime, or too festive; yet that all this passion is a caprice, a farce, a contortion, a comedy of illusions."<sup>9</sup> Baroque and Rococo are, of course, but two ingredients in 18th century Mexico, yet one feels that, indeed, "nothing can be too lavish, too festive" for the period. Yet it is the second part of Mr. Santayana's remark which must be particularly reinterpreted for Mexico. "All this passion" is *not* "a caprice, a farce, a contortion, a comedy of illusions." Worldly, it is, secular as only a profoundly religious country in a mood of Carnival can be; but there is an underlying seriousness in all the grace, an inflexible respect for older traditions beneath the gaudy and grotesque.

The *grandezza* of the Baroque is still there, and the exquisite artifices of the Rococo in a more muscular form than that of France. Mannerism, both as a foundation of the Rococo, and as the principal inspiration of the *estípite* work of Balbás<sup>10</sup> in its many Mexican interpretations, is of great importance. The obvious focus of the early manifestations of all this is the Cathedral of Mexico. In the interior of the cathedral is that symbolic work, which Justino Fernández has chosen for the second volume of his trilogy on Mexican aesthetics: *El Retablo de los Reyes*.<sup>11</sup> As it now gathers light from nearby sources, so it once directed its light

<sup>9</sup>George Santayana, *The Middle Span* (v. II of *Persons and Places*), New York: Charles Scribner's, 1945, pp. 2-3.

<sup>10</sup>Gerónimo or Jerónimo Balbás or Balbáz; see Baird, "Querétaro Style," note 1.

<sup>11</sup>Popularly called the Altar de los Reyes, it is more exactly a *Retablo*; begun in 1718 and finished in 1737, it was not gilded until 1743. cf. Justino Fernández, *El Retablo de los Reyes: Estética del Arte de la Nueva España*, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, Universidad N. A. de México, in print (part of series: *Estudios de Arte y Estética*); this has a complete summation of the place of this great work in critical and aesthetic history.

to nearby artists — a magnificent evocation of the complex ornamental language of Seville at the end of the Baroque, with the personal vocabulary of a great designer. It is impossible to overemphasize the impact that this work must have had on the period.

To this was soon added the reinforcing yet divergent genius of Lorenzo Rodríguez.<sup>12</sup> Heir of Francisco Hurtado, Cornejo, de Rueda and others, Rodríguez brought many of the ornamental and design predilections of Granada to bear on the lush style of Balbás, which despite its use of the *estípite* was strongly oriented to foliate and figure accents of the late 17th century in Seville. The young Rodríguez is known to have worked on the Retablo de los Reyes, which was finished in 1737; Balbás and he then collaborated on the Altar (or Retablo) del Perdón in the same year. It was the role of Rodríguez to make Balbás' *estípite* style widely acceptable in Mexico.

The present state of documentary knowledge in 18th century Mexico is extremely imperfect. Many of the same problems of attribution face the scholar here as in Spain. It would be foolish, however, to allow this archival difficulty to prevent some valid speculation on some of these problems. From such speculation, based on careful stylistic analogies and discreet intuitions, will come the assumptions for which we must await documentary proof. This is particularly true in relation to the third quarter of the 18th century in Mexico. It seems likely, as a first assumption, that a fairly extensive school of designers must have developed around the aging Balbás and the more vigorous Rodríguez. The second assumption is that this school (comparable to that in Granada about the same time) must have been subject to local ideas, and must have been occasionally stimulated by the arrival of other young Spanish designers of the generation after Rodríguez. The third assumption is that this school must have lost some of its members to provincial centers, particularly in the *nouveau riche* mining towns of north-central Mexico, where the *cachet* of metropolitan origins would be appreciated. It is on these three assumptions that many of the style patterns of the later 18th century must be based.

Thus at Tepozotlán, which has long been disputed as a center of Rodriguezan activity in the 1750's, we see a translation of the Baroque implications of the Retablo de los Reyes into the characteristic decorated wall of Mexico. Mexican design is by no means indifferent to space — the magnificent if simple manipulations of space in the 16th century, the dazzling fantasy of the 17th century Rosary chapels, the ingenious

<sup>12</sup>See Baird, "Querétaro Style", note 15. Margaret Collier is currently completing a doctoral dissertation for Yale University on the work of Rodríguez.

illusionism of the 18th century *camarines*, cannot be overlooked. Still these are essentially exotic importations, based on Hispanic or other prototypes, albeit (as in the *capillas abiertas*) carried to a point unthought of in the old world. From the Baroque, the 18th century derives an admiration for contrasts of light and dark, of form and non-form, of accent and background. The glitter of the 18th century is basically Rococo, although carried out with a thoroughness that would have bankrupted the Baroque, and been impossible both aesthetically and economically in 18th century France. There is an almost shocking glare of gold leaf that is essentially new world and *nouveau riche*, yet vaguely reminiscent of that careless prodigality of color and precious materials at the court of Moctezuma II.

I shall not attempt to discuss the attribution problems of Tepozotlán's retables yet; let them stand as a point of departure for a host of less sophisticated *estipite* retables, and a point of contrast to the regional change in the Querétaro style. The latter is one of the many local schools of the later 18th century, nourished by metropolis and local imaginations. The Mother Superior's balcony at Santa Clara, Querétaro (c. 1790) reveals the trend in the last decades of the 18th century away from architectonic definitions to purely ornamental articulations, with all of the rich panoply of sources, European and Mexican.<sup>13</sup> It may lack the ultimate glitter imparted by mirror fragments, as in the *camarín* at Santo Domingo in Granada (finished in 1773), and the characteristic geometricizing polychromed marble dados of Andalusia; but the *estofado* and gold of Mexico is a fit equivalent for the prismatic sparkle of glass, metal and marble — especially in the unusual nacreous enamels of Querétaro.

I must omit in this article any adequate evaluation of the classicism of the 18th century; it was, however, a constant undercurrent in the period. As the 16th century had its Tecali as distinct from its Yuriria, and the 17th century had its Puebla as distinct from its Querétaro,<sup>14</sup> so the 18th century had its Cathedral of Oaxaca as distinct from its San Cayetano de la Valenciana (which is no less formally balanced). It is important to acknowledge this feeling for order

<sup>13</sup>Aside from the diverse pre-Renaissance sources of Hispanic and Mexican design, there were, of course, a prodigal variety of sources possible both from the classicist and the mannerist sides of Renaissance and Baroque design; to compound this, there was an odd assortment of itinerant German, French and Italian artisans in Spain during the 18th century, who certainly added to the heritage of Mexico; see Marqués de Lozoya, *op. cit.*, IV, pp. 413-449.

<sup>14</sup>cf. John McAndrew in collaboration with Manuel Toussaint "Tecali, Zacatlán and the Renacimiento Purista", *Art Bulletin*, December, 1942, XXIV, no. 4, pp. 311-325.



whether expressed in classicistic or *mudéjar* terms, which reinforces native Mexican traditions of symmetry and balance, of a profound feeling for relationships of large and small, of decorated and undecorated. It would be absurd to attempt to compare in any exact sense, the central part of the "Governor's Palace" at Uxmal with any of the 18th century works I have shown, yet there is a spiritual affinity of the pre-Columbian and the 18th century in attitudes to design, in their understanding of the harmony of complexity.

As for the *mudéjar*, it is just beneath the surface, or very often right on the surface; Toussaint has admirably explored the role of *mudéjar*.<sup>15</sup> Here I would like to point out merely that it may be expressed in terms of geometricizing panelling, with Rococo details, as at Valenciana, or in a severely rectilinear pattern of tiles as on the Casa de los Azulejos in Mexico City. A section of that work, although a 20th century copy of the 18th century, is revealing. In one part, the craftsman has transposed a portion of the pattern whether in response to an intuitive feeling for variation or whether accidentally. The result is by no means "spoiled" as a European might see it — indeed, the craftsman has positively improved the repetitive pattern by this development of a slight change. It is this indefinable improvisatory quality, which is at once the despair of the non-Mexican and the very essence of the Mexican, that raises often naive borrowings or accidental imperfections to the realm of the imaginative.

Finally, in this introductory section, I wish to reiterate one general characteristic of 18th century architectural design, which will be obvious to all students of the period — the close relation of interior and exterior style changes. A general analogy, not attempting to prove any exact inter-action, will demonstrate this clearly. The recessed crucifix and the Salomonic columns of a retable from the cathedral of San Cristóbal has its exterior variant in the façade of San Agustín at Querétaro (1745). Conventions of material are sometimes important, and sometimes not; most of the great changes in style from 1550 to 1800 are evolved as interior features and then exteriorized with modifications.

Diego Angulo has given us some analysis of the church façades of the 18th century in terms of personalities and their influence;<sup>16</sup> Kelemen and Elizabeth Wilder Weissmann have contributed valuable individual

<sup>15</sup>Manuel Toussaint, *Arte Mudéjar en América*, México, Porrúa, 1946, pp. 25-48; cf. also Diego Angulo Iñiguez, "The Mudéjar in Mexico", *Ars Islamica*, II, no. 2, pp. 225-230.

<sup>16</sup>*Historia del Arte Hispanoamericano*, Barcelona, Salvat Editores, 1950, II, chapters XIII-XX.

studies of miscellaneous works of the period.<sup>17</sup> No one has yet, however, examined or accurately dated either all of the metropolitan or all of the non-metropolitan façades of importance, as evidence of a gradual change of style from the international implications of the Balbás-Rodríguez *estípita* to the great façades of the late 18th century in northern Mexico. I have been able to choose but a few of such works for this article; and I must omit much of the fascinating, still puzzling complex of relationships between interior and exterior. This must be a progress report, which will, I hope, stimulate its readers to new thoughts on a neglected subject.

First: a few remarks on the elements of the façade, which are emphasized in non-metropolitan Mexican work (I hesitate to use the word "provincial" with all of its pejorative connotations). In Mexico, from the 16th century on, the façades of smaller religious edifices — chapels and churches — tend to be centered on a roundheaded portal (the roundness is often approximated by mixtilinear shapes), with a round-headed window above. (In the 18th century this window becomes polygonal or star-shaped.) Sometimes there is a modest niche or relief over the portal. This is really not as obvious as it might seem. The convention in Spain is quite different. There, it is the niche or relief which is emphasized; the window is not generally so important as in Mexico.<sup>18</sup> Around these openings, there is a grouping of rigidly symmetrical decorative features, on a screen-wall, which rarely express the interior structure (which, of course, is generally rather simple). In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, towers begin to appear, until they become a commonplace of the parish churches of the late colonial period.

With these extremely limited elements of design and organization Mexican craftsmen create a richness of variation that has few parallels anywhere in the world. Two comparisons of 16th and 18th centuries will suggest this eloquently. Santiago at Angahua (1577) shows the elements clearly. There are implied changes of depth in the surface, strongly sculptural in character, unusually subtle relations of portal and window through the changing shapes and directions of the *alfiz* frame,

<sup>17</sup>Pal Kelemen, *Baroque and Rococo in Latin America*, New York, Macmillan 1951, pp. 85-104; Wilder Weissman, *op. cit.*, pp. 115, 144-149.

<sup>18</sup>George Kubler, *Arquitectura de los Siglos XVII Y XVIII (Ars Hispanica XIV)*, Madrid, Editorial Plus-Ultra, 1957.

<sup>19</sup>A *mudéjar* feature; it consists usually of a stepped rectilinear molding (occasionally with new world modifications — as at Huejotzingo, where the Franciscan cord is used in place of an architectural molding for the purpose) that outlines the portal and limits the decoration around that portal to a distinct right-angled enclosure.

and decorated surfaces, and a surprisingly vertical development, despite the pronouncedly horizontal moldings. In the late 18th century façade of El Carmen at Tehuacán, the elements of opening are the same. The flat relief of the 16th century, with its implications of depth and surface, is replaced with strongly plastic features, like the multiple pilaster (which I have called the pilaster in echelon, derived from the shadow pilasters of Michelangelo).<sup>20</sup> The subtle vertical-horizontal balance of the 16th century *mudéjar* façade is replaced by the broken pediment and spirals of the Baroque, and the window has a crimped, *rocaille* inspired intrados. The same basic elements, many of the same design attitudes are present, but the result is quite different.

On a slightly more developed scale, the façade of San Agustín Acolman (1539 ff.) has a typical Plateresque negation of architectonic order (through modified and ornamented classical orders), with the parts enveloped by the wall, as a background for this basically sculptural surface. San Felipe Neri, at San Miguel de Allende (1714-20), shows the same tendency to dissolve classical order (here in the foliate entwined columns that approximate the Salomonic type), the same kind of sculptural surface, and with even the *campanario* of San Agustín moved down — as more befitting the discreet Baroque of this façade — to a position above the window in the guise of a columned niche. Of course, there is a great difference in kind between these works, but I stress some of the similarities to show what infinite and yet often slight changes were effected from one style or period to another.

The Cathedral of Zacatecas, of which the façade must date towards the end of the building here (c. 1754),<sup>21</sup> shows the same sense of foliate investiture as San Felipe at San Miguel de Allende. The lower columns appear as Corinthian shafts covered with a growth of decorative fungus, and the upper ones have happily dissolved into cascades of shells, rows of *putti* or feather-tailed caryatids. The whole is contained beneath a wide, drilled and carved canopy that changes the velvet of a baldachin to the crisply mannered surfaces of the local brownstone. The window and mixtilinear-headed portal remain as before; the monu-

<sup>20</sup>That is, pilasters which are placed one on top of the other to create a stepped surface increasing in width toward the back of a wall; they appear on the top storey of the *cortile* of the Palazzo Farnese in Rome, and are a common device in the later 16th century for modifying the strict classicism of the High Renaissance in preparation for the reduplications of the Baroque. See Baird, "Ornamental Niche-Pilaster", p. 8 and note 15.

<sup>21</sup>Francisco de la Maza, "El Arte en la Ciudad de Nuestra Señora de los Zacatecas", *México en el Arte*, no. 7, pp. 11-13, dates the reconstruction to 1730-1760.

ment is unique, part of the later vogue for the Salomonic style, but not resulting in any circle of similar works.

The Salomonic or twisted capital of the early 18th century (particularly influential before 1735, but continuing in some measure of importance as late as 1750 or 60 in certain areas), is essentially a variant form of late-Baroque classicism, with the twisted column substituted for the Corinthian. The ornamental *répertoire* associated with the Salomonic column (or *Salomónica*) is Renaissance and Baroque; it lacks the mixed heritage of the ornament associated with the *estípite*, with its addition of Mannerism and the Rococo to Renaissance and Baroque. Many of the northern cathedrals, such as Durango and Chihuahua, show the close relationship of Salomonic and classicizing columns at this period;<sup>22</sup> and even Taxco (1751-58 by Diego Durán)<sup>23</sup> is still cast in the mixed mode of the classical and the twisted column (although *estípite* pilasters appear on the towers). At Taxco, too, the markedly articulative character of the late Baroque of Spain is apparent.

El Carmen, San Luis de Potosí, dated between 1749 and 1764, with its façade probably closer to the latter date, combines the *Salomónica* in the first level with *estípites* in the second level; this is a feature that has interior parallels in Granada, but never with such exterior vigor. The undercut Salomonic columns, like oriental ivory balls, within a slotted shaft, are unique; the Manueline-inspired knobbed portal-head has a parallel elsewhere.<sup>24</sup> Notable is the completely unstructural canopy at the apex of the façade, suggesting in more literal terms the enveloping upper part of the contemporary Cathedral of Zacatecas.

<sup>22</sup>The cathedral of Durango was begun in 1645 by Bishop Legaspi and finished under Bishop Tapiz in 1713. The Cathedral of Chihuahua was constructed between 1726 and 1789. The façade of the cathedral of Saltillo (the cathedral was begun in 1745 and finished in 1800), as befits its generally later period of construction, combines the *Salomónica* with the *estípite*, popular in the north after 1750.

<sup>23</sup>The church of San Sebastián y Santa Prisca at Taxco was built between 1751 and 1758, under the direction of Diego Durán and Juan Caballero; Angulo Íñiguez, *Historia del Arte Hispanoamericano*, II, p. 550, identifies the architect Durán, mentioned in a document discovered by Toussaint at Taxco, as Diego Durán Berruecos, registered as a Spaniard in Mexico City in 1753; Juan Caballero was "maestro de la obra".

<sup>24</sup>Manuel Toussaint *et al.*, *Iglesias de México*, México, Secretaría de la Hacienda, 1924 ff., VI, p. 92, attributes this orientalizing tendency to Pueblan influence; there are, to my knowledge, no other such *Salomónicas* in any part of Mexico including Puebla. The knobbed portal-head is echoed at Guanajuato in the main door of San Diego, which is apparently much later in date; cf. Marmolejo *Efemérides Guanajuatenses*, Guanajuato, Francisco Díaz, 1907, p. 233: "1784, 2 de Junio. Se concluye y estrena el Templo de San Diego magníficamente re-edificado después de la catástrofe ocasionada por la inundación de 1780."

Lorenzo Rodríguez' Sagrario façades are the only completely documented works of this type from his hand and they present, perhaps, the finest statement of the *estípite* façade of the period 1735-1775 in Mexico.<sup>25</sup> Notable here, too, in the second storey is the gradual rise to prominence of the ornamental niche-pilaster. The Santísima façade<sup>26</sup> in Mexico City is certainly related, but it is weaker in every respect than the magnificently tectonic Sagrario façades, which have no exact parallel anywhere in Spain. The impress of the influences of Lorenzo's masters, actual or otherwise, is apparent; but the end result is authentically personal. Tepozotlán's façade (usually dated 1760-62)<sup>27</sup> presents immediately the problems of this era. Here is a façade that has an almost uncanny echo of individual motifs from the Sagrario façades, but the result is more refined, more diffused in design, and less tectonic. At Tepozotlán, the designer has expressed Rodríguez' ideas in more truly Mexican form; the niches of the Sagrario façades are replaced by the inevitable window, and the upper part of the design has a non-architectural interest in silhouette that goes beyond the Sagrario façades, destroying the tectonic firmness of the latter. It seems likely that this façade at Tepozotlán is by a very close follower of Rodríguez'; its uniqueness should prove no difficulty. As at Zacatecas or Ocotlán, one designer may well have labored more than two years to initiate and complete this work. Rodríguez' own work at the Sagrario took almost twenty years; 1760 may mark the beginning of work at Tepozotlán, but it was probably not entirely finished in 1762. Indeed it probably was begun before 1760.

The interior of Tepozotlán is more problematic; I prefer to see, at least stylistically, the collaboration of various designers here. Past attributions have included the aged Gerónimo Balbás and Isidoro Vicente de Balbás, his son. Documentary proof is still lacking. One document

<sup>25</sup>In 1749 permission was granted for the erection of a Sagrario to the east of the Cathedral of Mexico, and on February 4, 1749, the plan of Lorenzo Rodríguez was accepted. The Sagrario was dedicated on February 6th, 1768. The interior was damaged by fire twice towards the end of the 18th century; severe earthquake damage occurred in 1858 and 1895. The Sagrario has long been closed for repairs, which apparently are about completed.

<sup>26</sup>La Santísima Trinidad — begun 1755 and dedicated in 1783.

<sup>27</sup>The standard monograph on the great Jesuit seminary church of San Francisco Xavier at Tepozotlán is Rafael Heliodoro Valle, *El Convento de Tepozotlán*, México, Talleres gráficos del museo nacional, 1924; concise and well illustrated is von Wuthenau, *Tepozotlán*, México, 1940. The most recent monograph is Pablo C. de Gante, *Tepozotlán: su historia y sus tesoros artísticos*, México, Editorial Porrúa, S. A. (Colección de Libros de Arte), 1958. There are numerous documentary problems associated with work at Tepozotlán.

dates two of the retables to 1757: "a la moderna, dorados de oro fino, complemento a los demas de dicha iglesia," which implies that others had been completed already.<sup>28</sup> We know that in the Sagrario, some of the retables were not completed until at least 20 years after the exterior. Those at Tepozotlán were extremely large and costly works, equalling in magnitude the finest in the capital; but the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767 would have to mark a terminus to work here.

I believe the nave retables at Tepozotlán and the apse and transept retables at Taxco to be by the same designer, probably Vicente de Albás. The apse and transept retables at Tepozotlán are *sui generis*, although certainly related to the Retablo de los Reyes and the nave retables of Tepozotlán in many ways. Progressive features, such as the multiple pilaster in echelon and the pronounced emphasis on the ornamental niche-pilaster appear — generally related to developments of the 60's. There is some affinity between parts of the *retablo mayor* and the gilded retable at Dolores Hidalgo's parish church, which however has the *rocaille* surfaces of the 70's. There are distinct relationships between the transept retables at Tepozotlán and the façade and retables of San Cayetano de la Valenciana; there are obvious Hurtado features here too.

One can only assume that a school of younger designers were engaged at Tepozotlán, which must have been one of the major projects of the late 50's and early 60's. Of this school some members went to Taxco to complete certain of the nave retables there (c. 1775), which are *not* in Vicente de Albás' style; others went to northern Mexico. From this, too, follows the following basic corollaries: 1. That collaboration of designers was necessary on these incredibly large and costly retable groups, with few parallels in Spain; 2. That inter-relationships of local style were common; 3. That the works took longer and continued later than commonly assumed.

The setting of 18th century Mexican provincial churches is very often flawless. This is particularly true of the Santuario de Ocotlán, above Tlaxcala, which has one of the most impressive locations in central Mexico. The façade of this church must be at least 1765 or 1770 in date<sup>29</sup> and shows a fine sense of architectonic order with the gradual

<sup>28</sup>From Valle, *Tepozotlán*, p. 70; "Nov. 13, 1757. En este día en el colegio de Tepozotlán. . . estrenándose dos bellísimos retablos a la moderna, etc., que en el tiempo de seis años ha hecho el rector R. P. M. rector Pedro Ríos. . . el costo de éstos, las alhajas y ornamentos que en el referido Tepozotlán se han hecho, el de 110,000 pesos." Valle corrects the author of this statement, José Manuel de Casto Santa-Anna, in the detail that Ríos' name was actually Reales.

<sup>29</sup>Angulo Inñiguez, *Historia del Arte Hispanoamericano*, II, pp. 644-648, describes the façade in some detail, without suggesting any specific date or master.



rise to prominence of the ornamental pilaster, or niche-pilaster between *estípites*. The essentially interior feature of a figure silhouetted against a window (here meaningless in terms of light as silhouette on the outside) which had been seen first in Portugal and then in Spain, is indicative of the gradual exteriorizing of progressive retable features in the later 1760's and early 70's. The use of moldings as plastic accents of ornament (in the center above the portal) is paralleled by the work of F. X. Pedraxas in Priego and Lucena in Spain; this will reach its height in Mexico at Valenciana.

On the façade of Dolores Hidalgo (c. 1778),<sup>30</sup> the *estípites* lose the aggressive insistence of even Ocotlán, and become a series of stepped vertical accents, elements of transition from the niche-pilaster to portal and upper window. Here again, Andalusian features appear; the cusped arch of the portal is similar to one in the patio of the Casa del Marqués de Montana at Jerez by Antonio Matías de Figueroa (c. 1780);<sup>31</sup> it is of course related also to the earlier cusped and knobbed arch at El Carmen, San Luis de Potosí. A more relevant and temporally more plausible comparison can be made with the façade of San Diego at Guanajuato (after 1780). The twisted bases of columns here recall those in churches in Jerez.<sup>32</sup>

In all of these later 18th century, northern churches the portal and window above are carefully related by dipping cornices and broken horizontal moldings. Seen as an ensemble, the façade at Dolores presents an order and regularity that are not far from approaching neo-Classical. The stuccoed-tower bases are distracting, and somewhat cheapen this noble design. The balustrade, for which there was no prototype in earlier Mexican facades, is an important element of sobriety and finality, in comparison with the frankly picturesque or uneven apexes of other late 18th century works. In exterior and interior, here, there is a feeling of cosmopolitan taste, tempered with a strong flavor of indigenous imagination (particularly in the ungilded retable in the right transept of the interior, so very different from the gilded one in the left transept by the Dolores master; the former is also closely related to the Querétaro style, of Querétaro, Salamanca and Chamacuero).<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup>The construction of the church dates from 1712 to 1778; the façade must date, on stylistic evidence, at the very end of this period.

<sup>31</sup>George Kubler, *op. cit.*, p. 310.

<sup>32</sup>cf. Antonio Sancho Corbacho, *Jerez y los Puertos, Cuadernos de Arte*: II, Madrid, Instituto de Cultura Hispánica, 1947.

<sup>33</sup>Francisco de la Maza and Víctor Manuel Villegas have "discovered" the very fine transept retables of the church at Chamacuero to add to the group studied in Baird, "Querétaro Style".

The return to a vertical pairing of accents, as in the classicizing façades of the late 17th and 18th centuries, is signalized in *estípita* form at San Francisco in San Miguel de Allende (after 1779).<sup>34</sup> Although the *estípitas* are markedly Rodríguez' in type, the entire façade has a spindliness and sparseness that is different in attitude from even the façade at Tepozotlán, which it resembles in parts. The mixtilinear cresting provides a convenient point of transition to the most important façade of this entire area.

San Cayetano de la Valenciana (ded. in 1788)<sup>35</sup> is all that remains of a once prosperous community.<sup>36</sup> Like much of the architecture of Querétaro and San Miguel, and neighboring Guanajuato, San Cayetano is constructed of a rose stone that varies in color from pink to brown; the carving is of the most masterful refinement. What Tepozotlán had done for the *estípita* style of 1760, Valenciana does for work of 1780. The isolated setting is partially false, lacking as it does the once lively surrounding town; but the superb elevation is unchanged and as effective as ever as an element of late Baroque theater. The *élan* of Rodríguez' Mannerist-Baroque style is here, tinged with the surface elegance of the *rocaille*,<sup>37</sup> which developed particularly in Mexico after 1770. The undeniable relationship of both the façade and the retables at Valenciana with the apse and transept retables at Tepozotlán is extremely important.<sup>38</sup>

Here is proof positive of the three assumptions which I suggested earlier — the school in Mexico City about 1760, the responsiveness of the school to local and fashionable new ideas from Spain, the dispersal of personnel to the rich mining communities of north-central Mexico.

<sup>34</sup>The first stone of this church was laid in 1779; the latest, in the façade tower, in 1799.

<sup>35</sup>The best monograph is Antonio Cortés, *La Valenciana*, México, Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1933.

<sup>36</sup>cf. H. G. Ward, *Mexico in 1827*, London, Henry Colburn, 1828, II, p. 426: "... Valenciana (where the population amounted to 7,000 souls)."

<sup>37</sup>The use of crimped shells and other motifs characteristic of the international Rococo are particularly obvious in north-central Mexico, where most of the building comes toward the end of the 18th century — a time when the vogue for the Rococo is complemented by a tremendous outpouring of mineral wealth.

<sup>38</sup>The retables at Valenciana have inscriptions that date them to 1778; it is interesting that the costs of these late 18th century retables were much greater than those of the early 18th century (40,000 pesos for the *retablo mayor* at La Valenciana — Cortés, *Valenciana*, p. 44 — as compared to the approximately 18,000 pesos for the Retablo de los Reyes in Mexico City). A gradual increase in cost over a fifty year period reflects the inflationary effect of vastly increased silver production and a general rise in agricultural prosperity throughout the country.



The Hispanic analogy for Valenciana can be seen in San Juan de Dios in Linares, Spain, which has the same layered patterns of ornament, the geometricizing moldings, the sunken panelling, the vivid silhouette, etc. of San Cayetano.<sup>39</sup> The ultimate triumph of this designer is the side portal of Valenciana, where the towering progressively-advanced layers of ornament and the emphasis on the ornamental niche-pilaster are most developed. The combination of *rocaille* and *mudéjar* returns as in the principal portal of the main façade; and outlining both sides of the side door are flowing streamers in the manner of the Mother-Superior's balcony at Santa Clara, Querétaro.

In 18th century Mexico, the word style has many meanings. It may be the great style of an international character like the Mannerist-Baroque *estípita* style of Balbás and Rodríguez, which is constantly enriched by reference to ornamental source books and by impact of strong, new personalities. In this sense, there is really only one major style in 18th century Mexico—this *estípita* style or Mexican Churrigueresque, with its modifications as suggested here. The problems of the inter-relations of such a style with regional ideas, so well expressed by John McAndrew as long ago as 1945,<sup>40</sup> are infinite. Much must be conceded by both members of the relationship, if the result is to be both genuine and of good quality.

More even than Spain with its already ambivalent heritage, Mexico responded to the rhythms and involvements, psychological and artistic, of an unusually varied past — almost all of which have, in one way or another, stressed applied decoration of a strongly plastic character. In the very social and cultural nature of 18th century Mexico, there were factors which favored the maximum development of regional styles based on a major international influence. It was a period when what one might call modified native responses were admired and encouraged, when the level of craftsmanship insured a generally interesting product, no matter what the process. These regional responses were expressed in a complex ornamental language, which in its main sources could be understood by any trained designer. The result was a group of works which can today excite the imagination of anyone sensitive to fine design, proving that "in the service of love and imagination, nothing can be too lavish, too festive, too sublime."

<sup>39</sup>Kubler, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

<sup>40</sup>John McAndrew, "The Relationship of Mexican Architecture to Europe: Problems in the Field of Colonial Studies", *Studies in Latin American Art* (Proceedings of a Conference Held in the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 28-31 May 1945), edited by Elizabeth Wilder, American Council of Learned Societies, Washington, 1949, pp. 27-33.



# THE OPEN CHAPEL IN MEXICO

Vera L. Peacock

*" . . . .en esta tierra los patios son muy grandes y muy gentiles, porque la gente no cabe en las iglesias, y en los patios tiene su capilla para que todos oyan misa los domingos y fiestas, y las iglesias sirven para entre semana."*

Motolinia: Memoriales, I, 92-93

One curious and distinctive development of early ecclesiastic architecture in Mexico is the open chapel. The three great monastic orders<sup>1</sup> which early in the sixteenth century divided up Mexico for its spiritual welfare were amazingly successful. The construction of churches, rapid though it was, failed to keep pace with the thousands of converts who thronged to the services and filled the existing buildings to overflowing. Realizing that their Indian followers must have frequent opportunities for attending mass, the monks conceived the idea of erecting small chapels, large enough to shelter the altar and so constructed as to render it visible to great numbers of Indians outside. As the years passed, great cathedrals and many parish churches arose until there were more than enough to serve the people. The open chapels were gradually abandoned or enclosed and dedicated to special uses. Many have disappeared but those which remain provide an interesting commentary upon early colonial religious life in Mexico.

The various convents solved the problem of overcrowding in different ways. Some built an open balcony high on the convent wall or constructed shell-like niches on the side of the church. The Augustinians at Acolman and Actopan and the Franciscans at Otumba and Cuen-

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<sup>1</sup>The Franciscans, arriving in 1524, took the Valley of Mexico and spread southeast and northwest into Michoacán and to Guadalajara, and later to Yucatán. The Dominicans, beginning in 1526, worked south from Mexico City in the direction of Puebla and as far as Oaxaca. The Augustinians, beginning in 1533, operated also in the Mexican Valley and to the northeast in the present state of Hidalgo and part of Michoacán.

navaca have left structures of this sort.<sup>2</sup> Occasionally, a church entrance set in a deep embrasure forms an open chapel as does the front portal of San Juan de Dios in Mexico City. Still other convents provided separate buildings, such as the royal chapel at Cholula<sup>3</sup> and the chapel of San José de los Naturales<sup>4</sup> in Mexico City. Atrium chapels erected in the corners of the convent atrium for the use of processions and pilgrims represent a special type of open chapel.<sup>5</sup> Huejotzingo has unusually fine ones with the Franciscan cord and interesting frescoes still visible.

The main idea behind the open chapel was, of course, to bring the altar and hence the ceremony of the mass within the range of vision of as many people as possible. The plans of the various types show how successfully this purpose was achieved. The balcony type by reason of its height could be easily seen by great numbers of people. It had, however, the psychological disadvantage of making the service more of a spectacle than a communal act. The ground chapels achieved the latter quite as well as a church interior, but it was more difficult for large congregations to see. These chapels followed in general one of two plans, although there were individual modifications of both. The simpler type, found usually on the north side of the church, had its axis perpendicular to the church wall. It was relatively shallow, usually had no naves and opened onto the atrium with one or more arches. The unfinished Franciscan Chapel of Tlalmanalco, the Dominican Chapel at Coixtlahuaca and the Chapel of Cuilapan<sup>6</sup> belong to this type, or to a modification of it.

A more complicated type of open chapel was built parallel to the church with several naves opening on the atrium. One of the most accessible of the remaining examples of this type, the Royal Chapel of Cholula, has seven naves and its numerous columns and lofty domes recall the mosque of Córdoba. The resemblance is probably accidental, however, for the plan was the result of the monks' effort to care most

<sup>2</sup>To these might be added the chapel originally formed by the upper arches on the front wall of the convent at Yecapixtla.

<sup>3</sup>The present chapel was constructed in the seventeenth century on the plan of the original structure. It is now enclosed and dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe.

<sup>4</sup>No longer extant.

<sup>5</sup>"Certains de ces atrios - Huejotzingo, Cholula, Calpan - comportent même des espèces de petites chapelles, appelées *posas*, qui servaient probablement de reposoirs au cours des processions, et où l'on disait peut-être la messe." Ricard Robert: *La conquête spirituelle du Mexique*, p. 200.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 202. Scholars disagree as to the original purpose of this large chapel. It was, however, for years open on the atrium side; later enclosed.

effectively for their flock rather than an attempt to copy Moorish architecture. An interesting variation of this type, intermediate between it and simpler style, is such a chapel as the Capilla Vieja of Teposcolula. Here the axis is perpendicular to the nave of the church and one complete side is open to the atrium. The chapel consists of two naves with a hexagonal space in the center and opens to the public in five arches, which gives ample visibility of the altar to a large area. The chapel is now in ruins, but its fine proportions and restrained harmonious decoration are still evident. The simplicity of the pillars, the wide arches and beautiful vaulting make its probable disappearance the more regrettable.

In general, the decoration of open chapels tended toward simplicity and the use of large sculptures or paintings since they were destined to be seen at some distance. The back wall of the chapel at Acolman carried one large fresco of Saint Catherine. The portal chapel of San Juan de Dios is decorated with sculptured figures of imposing size. Occasionally, however, as at Tlalmanalco, the front arches bear very fine and intricate carving in the plateresque manner. Sometimes a strange oriental motif creeps into the decoration as at Coixtlahuaca, where the frieze is formed by dragon heads and pelicans tearing at their breasts. The carving of this chapel, as well as its columns and arches, are so similar in style to the Capilla Vieja de Teposcolula that they may well be the work of the same builder.

The chapel of Tizatlan<sup>7</sup> furnishes a good idea of a more ornately decorated open chapel. Manuel Toussaint, who gives a detailed description of the interior in his *Paseos Coloniales*, says that the walls were probably totally covered with paintings at one time. The remaining murals on the sides of the apse represent scenes of the passion and in technique recall the famous frescoes of Acolman. On a black and white design, flat colors — gray, blue and earth — are laid. The principal arch bears a most interesting painting, the Eternal Father, throned in glory and surrounded by angels and cherubim singing and playing musical instruments. The painting is vividly colored, with many reds and greens.<sup>8</sup> The *retablo* and other paintings are of a later date. Of the five great arches which originally opened onto the atrium, three have been incorporated in the church but the two remaining are charac-

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<sup>7</sup>This chapel was later incorporated in the church building so that its original purpose is not at first apparent to visitors.

<sup>8</sup>La primera vez que la vi pensé en la de las basílicas primitivas de Roma, con gran influencia bizantina. Toussaint, Manuel: *Paseos coloniales*, p. 134.

teristically early Franciscan and complete the picture of this well-preserved open chapel.

Since the need for open chapels has long since disappeared, few remain today in their original state. Some have been enclosed and dedicated to other uses; others have been incorporated into a church building or walled over. The balcony or niche types have the best chance of survival since they cover little space and tend to last as long as the building to which they are attached. It is to be hoped that a number of these will be preserved because of their intrinsic beauty and interest, and because they illustrate an important phase of the religious life of Mexico in the sixteenth century.

## PUERTO RICO THROUGH NEW ENGLAND EYES, 1831-1834\*

Edited by Frank Otto Gatell

The Puerto Rico of the 1830's was one of the two remaining jewels in the Spanish Imperial Crown in America. The tenor of its insular way had not been unaffected by the revolutions that in a half century had brought about the political separation of the Old World and the New. The *Reformismo Ilustrado* of the Bourbons which was begun in the previous century had left its mark on the island; and if insularity had more than literal connotations when applied to Puerto Rico, it was nevertheless true that increased trade with the United States was creating an economic bond foreshadowing the political absorption of 1898.

Change there was, yet Puerto Rico's journey into the modern world when measured against any but the most backward nation seemed slow indeed. Paradoxically, the Hispanic-American revolutions served to tie the island closer to the metropolis. No revolt occurred; instead there came an influx of exiled royalists — particularly from Venezuela. In addition, the Spanish soldiery increased in number so that it was not only the harbor's castle and the city walls that gave San Juan the appearance of a garrison town.

To this compact island society came two brothers from New England: Edward Bliss Emerson (1805-1834) and Charles Chauncy Emerson (1808-1836). Edward's stay was the longer of the two; he arrived in Puerto Rico in April, 1831, and with the exception of a short trip home in 1832, remained there until his death in August, 1834. He was employed as a clerk in the counting house of Sidney Mason, the American consul. Charles stayed only a few months during the winter of 1831-2.

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\*These letters appear through the kind permission of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association, Harvard University Library.

Both young men were well read, and Edward especially showed great promise as a scholar. The New England letter writing — and preserving — habit was strong, and their brother, Ralph Waldo Emerson, was only one of their many correspondents.

Tuberculosis had forced them to journey southward. However weak they may have been in body, they were strong in their beliefs concerning what constituted the good society. Their ambivalent attitudes toward life on the island — or rather San Juan and its environs — are as interesting as the details they preserved for us. For while the criticism of their hosts' mores is explicit, the Emerson brothers are honest enough (except with regard to Catholicism which in their view is *ipso facto* "irreligion") to point out areas in which their beloved New England might learn from what they considered an erring, puerile society.

[EDWARD BLISS EMERSON TO EZRA RIPLEY (Concord)]

St. Johns, Porto Rico, Oct. 30, 1831.

My dear & hon<sup>d</sup> Sir,

. . . . You are aware I suppose that this island like a docile child follows the mother country, & rests in the bosom of the Catholic Church. — There are two Convents with Churches attached to them & two other churches of considerable size, beside one or two small chapels. In all of these mass & bell & latin & images are found instead of stirring eloquence. — I am told that during Lent some sermons will be preached, — when I shall get a chance perhaps of being rebuked & warned. — At present my Sundays are indeed days of rest; & I confess that I often enjoy repose & liberty that offers itself here to one from whom no conformity is expected & upon whose conduct not a censorious remark is to be feared, so much that I forget to regret that I am not going to take my seat in the congregation. Every man may learn some thing from every other man, & perhaps every sect much from every other sect. While the Catholics of St. Johns might learn in New England to show their respect for the Sabbath by a more general suspension of labor & traffic than is here observed, I think the religionist of the north might also learn in Porto Rico the advantage of admitting relaxation & some amusement to enter into their holy time. Some men here fatigue themselves with secular business or riotous pastime; & some of the Christians of New England do so labor to be, to do, & to suffer good, on the Sabbath, that they certainly fail to obey the commandment "to do no manner of works" . . . .

your obliged & affectionate grandson  
Edward.



[CHARLES CHAUNCY EMERSON TO EDWARD BLISS EMERSON  
(San Juan, Puerto Rico)]

Boston Dec 1, 1831.

Dear Edward

I am coming to pay you a visit. You may have heard that I was sick a few weeks this last fall. Well the cold weather feels so uncomfortable to my dainty body, that it was agreed between Waldo & me & Winter & Dr. Jackson, that it would be mighty pleasant to eat oranges & wear thin jackets for four months to come, instead of staying here & shoveling snow.

I do not know that you are at this present moment in Porto Rico — since the Catholics may have extirpated such a root of heresy — So I shall probably take passage for St. Thomas . . . about the 10th Decr. When I get there shall write to you in P. R. & ascertain whether to go to you in P. R. or not by the answers I get. Perhaps you will not stay all the winter at P. R. I suppose the pleasantest island for a man to take his comfort in is St. Croix, but I shall of course like to be with you. . . .

Very affectionately  
Chas.

[CHARLES CHAUNCY EMERSON TO RALPH WALDO EMERSON  
(Boston)]

Porto Rico, Dec. 23, 1831

Dear Waldo.

Yesterday, the anniversary [*sic*] of the Pilgrim Landing, we anchored in the Harbour of St. Johns, & about Sundown I came ashore — for the first time planting my foot on a foreign soil. While we coasted along the island, though the features of the country were strange, yet the mere rest of the eye upon solid land & green vegetation, was refreshing, & were hailed by a trumpet-tongued warder in Spanish, a hundred feet or so above our heads, — when we could distinctly see the city, its high walls, & heavy, blank, jail-like rows of dwelling-houses, my feelings of recognition & familiarity died all away — And the dark looks & unintelligible jabber of the Spanish pilot, & the Custom house officers on board ship, prepared me to be very desolate in a community of twenty thousand such. Presently, however, came Mr. John Mason — with honest face, & English speech. . . . I plucked up heart — went ashore with Mr. M. found Edw[ard] in the Cafe & now began to be amazed & amused by all things I saw & heard — The din almost confounds one — for the people living as it were in the streets, & not being afflicted with complaints of the lungs, do apparently exult & disport themselves in the variety & volume of the sounds they utter. Certainly it is “*mundo nuevo*” to me in my simplicity, as well as to the Spanish Crown. Yet it is exactly what you should expect to have made out of a delightful climate, & commercial spirit acting on the colony of a decayed empire, on a people who want the *principle* of civilization.

The streets are regular, but dirty & ill stoned — I cannot call it paved, no use being made of carriages of any sort; & from what I see,

I should suppose my intended fellow passengers the mules would here come to a good market. I like the houses — those of the better class are extensive buildings, running (like Mr. S. Mason's, instance) from one street to another, but into square lofty, roughfinished rooms, & long passages, & a court yard, while servants seem to have lodges here & there in different quarters & everything reminds you of baronial states. All the floors & stairs are of brick or stone. From their balconies, the gentry look out upon a country which looks to me like nothing but W. Allston's landscapes — so warm & softly shadowed — smooth waters & dark browed hills. The air, though from the negligence about dirt you might expect it to be foul, is all the time fragrant & cordial. The talk, tho' not understood, & lively action of the people in the streets, chiefly blacks & poor Spaniards, is a continual entertainment. — Dec. 24 Last eveg. I took a walk with Edward outside of the walls of the city — We strolled along a green road, bordered here & there by a few peaked cabins, looking as simple & native as though they had grown out of the spot of earth they covered; on our right hand was the creek of the sea which I have said runs behind the island of St Johns & makes its harbour — beyond it rose the highlands of Porto Rico, in triple ranges, producing the fine effect we noticed in the scenery on Lake Champlain, each chain of hills falling back into a different hue & a fainter haze. On the left was a sloping bank of green on the summit of which run along the fortifications of the City & on whose acclivity the Spanish soldiers were now parading to the music of a full band. . . . I could hear the ocean announcing its presence by a long-resounding roar, & a few steps more brought me to a sight as magnificent as ever visited these eyes. . . . I turned as soon as I could to look again on those heights all painted & curtained by Sun & clouds, whose feet are thus bathed by the ever flowing sea, & I no longer wondered at the sanguine dreams & the poetic pomp which filled Columbus's soul, & burned in his descriptions of the world he discovered. . . .

Ever yrs.

Chas.

[CHARLES CHAUNCY EMERSON TO MARY MOODY EMERSON

(Waterford, Maine)]

Dec. 26, [1831] St Johns Porto Rico

Dear Aunt Mary —

Yesterday was Christmas Day & I heard Mass in the churches of the Catholics — gloomy buildings, that seem made to over awe & imprison the soul. The friars in their silken dress go about the streets of this balmy-aired city — Oh that you could have one glance from the ramparts over the "happy brimmed sea" which lulls & sings itself asleep on these green & sunny shores. . . . The commonest herbs look fine & rare. You remember the epitaph on Pizarro — which tells of his power, wealth, success, & closes thus "Reader art thou poor, art humble, Dost thou earn thy daily bread by daily labor. Thank the God that made thee, thou art not like Pizarro." Even so say I to this luxurious region. I thank the God who made me to grow up on the rugged soil, & beneath

the bleak heavens of New England — The purity of her snows is better than the Cyprian atmosphere of this sensual Paradise — & knowledge & truth to be had without money & without price, is a richer plenty than all the gorgeous feast which outward Nature here spreads for a race in whom the animal mounts above the intellectual & crushes the religious principle.

Ever yr. most fond & affectionate  
Chas. C. E

[CHARLES CHAUNCY EMERSON TO RALPH WALDO EMERSON

(Boston)]

Jan. 9, [1832] St. Johns — Porto Rico

Dear Waldo —

. . . . You say keep one eye a patriot & the other an emigrant. So I try to do, but the West Indian pupil is apt to contract & its brother meanwhile to dilate, till I look all asquint & the mind runs backward & enjoys the past, instead of searching, enjoying, & treasuring up the present scene.

I have . . . meant to say how the green visage of Nature, & the swarthy face of society here struck the newcomer. If the narrative draws & whines a little, set it down to home sickness. . . .

When I first landed with somewhat of a prejudice against Porto Rico, & a dismal idea of the Spaniards — and found myself in a little lively city which looked so picturesque & smelt like an orange, in the midst of the glorious scenery I have described to you more than once — while the inhabitants instead of knives & pistols wore the most peaceable garb in the world, & had a smile & greeting even for the stranger — when I thought of Columbus — that these islands were in a manner his family seat — that I was conversing with his colony, breathing the air, & regaled by the fruits which intoxicated his mighty imagination — I gave myself up to the genius of the place, & “my heart was cheered in the sight of mine eyes.” But you must either have Nature *alone* or she must be backed by virtue & intelligence in human society. Columbus came while all was Nature — there was a perfect harmony between the Indian naked or decked with the feathers he had robbed from the birds in his own woods, & the beautiful country through which he walked — But a garrison of 1200 whiskered soldados, with mortars & twenty four pounders planted thickly round the ramparts on every side — an irreligious people, in an utter stagnation of all healthy impulses from within or without — is no ways in keeping with the softness. . . .

Ever Yours —

Chas.

[CHARLES CHAUNCY EMERSON TO EZRA RIPLEY (Concord)]

St Johns Porto Rico, Jan. 15, 1832

My Dear Grandfather.

. . . . I am here domesticated in Edward's quarters with a great deal to entertain me in all I see, albeit there is much to regret, & much that is wanting. It is a place pleasant enough to visit, but not good to

live in. The men & women are a growth we could no more raise in New England, than we could oranges or bananas. They are spoiled children, grown up — Without any early education, & leading a life whose whole office it is to supply the desires of the body, shut out from all part in the public affairs, with no cultivated society, or circulation of knowledge, they naturally ripen into indolent, ignorant, untrustworthy, irreligious people — good humoured & courteous when not irritated or crossed; but easily enraged, & like most weak persons, prone to be jealous. I ought to say however that they treat a stranger very kindly, & that I find them better than I should have thought their education would make them. — —

Jan. 17. My letter was begun in the City; but yesterday I came out to Santa Barbara, Mr. Mason's plantation, about 5 miles from St. Johns. This morning, before breakfast, I rode to the top of a steep hill which commands a view of several miles round about; — and oh the beauty & fatness of the land! I feasted on it as on some delicious fruit. Spread out beneath my feet, was valley of thousands of acres — cane-fields & pasture-lands, a sheet of living green, with lofty cocoas & palmetto trees standing about like sentinels, & giving an air of stately repose to the whole. The little village of Bayamon lay full in sight reflecting the sun's rays from the walls of its old Church — & sprinkled over the verdant map, at intervals, the small clusters of buildings which mark a Plantation. . . .

The slaves enjoy a good deal, & are humanely treated in this island, as I am told they are generally through the West Indies — more so than in the U. S. But I am too lately come from the cheerful abodes of free labourers, to look at them with any satisfaction — I feel grieved, & at the same time humiliated, as we do when we see the monkey. They do not work nearly so hard, as does a Yankee farmer — but they work without the consciousness of liberty & property, which makes toil honorable & sweet. No human society is perfect — In each & all are wrapt up some elements of evil, which alarm the patriot & ask his constant, watchful care — but to tolerate slavery is nothing so much, as sewing up the body politic (as the ancient did the parricide) in a sack with a living viper. Slavery affords a frightful illustration of the infinite mischief which waits on one false step, a single bad institution. — My letter has unintentionally taken the same shifting course, in which my thoughts daily move — from the delightful climate, & outward luxuries of the West Indian, to his dreary dearth of all moral advantages. The most lovely spots on our Earth, seem fated to be nests of suffering & wrong. . . .

Your dutiful & affectionate gr. son  
Chas. C. Emerson

[EDWARD BLISS EMERSON TO RALPH WALDO EMERSON (Boston)]  
Pto Rico Jan'y 20, 1833.

My dear Waldo,

. . . . A new thing under the sun of Porto Rico at least in St. Johns has been an American gig. Mr. Mason has rec<sup>d</sup> one lately from

Philad<sup>a</sup>., & two fine rides therein I credit to his politeness. — Other novelties we have not or I would tell them. — Last night being benefit night for the principal actress at the theatre, she sat in the porch & received the "entrada". This is fixed at 2 rials or 25¢; the Spaniards showed their generosity by giving some, a dollar, others 2\$ & so on. Four handed in doubloons, here equal to 19\$. This is a kind of liberality which is peculiarly Spanish. They are prone to impulses & obedient to Fashions, & considerate in respect to the necessities of their neighbors, — of what class soever. . . .

Yrs ever  
Edward

[CHARLES CHAUNCY EMERSON TO RALPH WALDO EMERSON

(Boston)]

Santa Barbara — [Puerto Rico] Feb. 2, 1832.

Dear Waldo.

I have read nothing since I came away from home except this volume of [Madame de Stael's] Germany . . . a couple of numbers of the Edinburgh [Review], & a few tracts that Mrs. Spaulding, (the wife of the manager of Sta. Barbara. . .) lent me — There are some old Englishmen about here, who have some old English books — but the Spaniards never read, & have nothing in the shape of a book but their primmer & missal. There is but one printing press in the island & that is occupied in printing the Gazette & all sorts of invitations to funerals, weddings, & balls, together with lottery tickets & public notices. A cigar is the Creole's . . . novel. I believe I must have Sprague's eulogy on tobacco, "Tis paradise &c" translated into the Castellano, — the subject might carry down the verse.

But what are you doing & thinking about? Put a few Epic conceptions on paper for your famishing brothers in Porto Rico. . . .

The wing of God's love infold you & my dear mother —  
Chas.

[CHARLES CHAUNCY EMERSON TO WILLIAM EMERSON]

[Puerto Rico] Feb. 5, 1832

[copy of part of letter]

The condition of the Slaves here is, physically considered, very tolerable. They are not whipped severely, oftener than once a month or so — Self interest prevails with their master to treat them well when mercy or justice would plead in vain. They are in general neither overworked, nor ill-fed; they have their patch of ground & sell to their master on fair terms, the products of their land, or of their skill & labour in holiday hours — Any one may buy himself free with the price for which he was bought by his then owner — & the master can demand no more, whatever art he may have taught him. Still he is made to feel his fetters — Slight faults are heavily punished. If he raised his hand against a white, it is death — He is called to work by the crack of the

whip — And the theory is, he is ruined if not kept in order by an occasional flogging — What the law is in regard to teaching them reading or writing, I do not know — nor is it at present practically of much importance — for there is little [illeg. (literacy?, education?)] lose in the Island, & it is in no danger of finding its way to the slaves. . . .

[EDWARD BLISS EMERSON TO RALPH WALDO EMERSON

(Liverpool)]

Pto Rico — Aug. 16, 1833.

Dear Waldo,

I lie not when I say I'm glad that you did not come here. . . . What is the puppet show of a few thousand ignorant & sensual men, acted within the narrow streets of a single city, whose circuit may be walked in a half hour, whose commerce, police, diversions &c. may be studied out in another, or taking the rest of the island into the question, what is the sight of a few rich vales & woody mountains & waving cane-fields & blossoming coffee plantations — with half a hundred villages & half a score of ports & less than half a million of men of twenty different colours & as many tongues — What is it, this daubed & miniature caricature of life, to the mighty spectacle you now look on! . . . . I am living still as you see away from home, hoping for a time when a whale of an opportunity shall carry me across the sea again a most willing mariner to my native rock bound shore. — . . . .

Yours affecty.

Edward

[EDWARD BLISS EMERSON TO CHARLES CHAUNCY EMERSON]

Porto Rico Oct. 29 1833.

My dear Charles

. . . . You tell of Cambridge, & of the eloquence of the untiring [Edward] Everett as we may well call him. To all that relates to literature, & its triumphs you will ever find me I trust a ready listener. The milk of the Alma Mater has gone into my blood & will course about the heart, till "The wheel is broken at the cistern." But you must expect no echo from P. R. to such intelligence. We have no returns to make (to use a mercantile phrase) for news of science or letters. — I have attended no Commencement; & the oratory to be heard in the Comptghouse, or the street is all to which I have access. This colloquial discourse is indeed at times marked with enough of shrewdness & at others with enough of invective, but it dwells on petty interests, in the one case, or in the other expires in vociferation — . . . .

Goodbye —

Ed.

[EDWARD BLISS EMERSON TO RALPH WALDO EMERSON (Boston)]

Porto Rico Nov 13, 1833.

Dear Waldo —

I welcome you home again; that is to the Western hemisphere, to the new world of Columbus, for at least within such limits our straggling

fortunes are again united. — . . . . The flags have been all day at half mast, & the yards crossed & guns firing, one every  $\frac{1}{4}$  hour for Ferd [inad] VII's death, which was officially announced here yesterday. . . .

Love & honor due. —

Your's E B E.

[EDWARD BLISS EMERSON TO MARY MOODY EMERSON

(Waterford, Maine)]

St. Johns Porto Rico April 5th 1834

My dear Aunt Mary,

. . . . The old saw about seeing a shipwreck from a safe stand on shore is quite descriptive of the moderated & tranquil (not to say poetic and romantic) interest with which from this little island one contemplates the distant and diminutive nations of either hemisphere. The sort of government used here exempts the private man from the trouble of taking any pains about the management of public affairs; he has only to let the state alone, & mind his own business. I mean that no man here will be drawn away from studies or the contemplations he may love, by any patriotic notion of being compelled to raise his voice or write his volume about this measure or the other; no nullification party, no U. S. Bank party, no caucuses interrupt him. Even the apathy & the no less remarkable ignorance of the people aid in rendering the solitude of an educated man more complete. He will not be diverted from his chosen paths of speculation or inquiry, by any calls upon his time for literary contributions, labors in this cause & labors in that; hardly will be tasked by one inquirer in a twelve month to exhibit any of the stores of information he may have accumulated; and the childish frivolity of the amusements of the place will disgust rather than tempt our supposed recluse. Thus I have often thought that a Dramatist or Novelist would find here a charming retreat in which to mature the productions of another "great unknown." Sure I am that Scott could not have lived here 6 months without writing some tale, in which Spanish courtesy & frankness & selfrespect, blending with Creole indolence and passion for amusements would have been spread out to the eyes of the world in a splendid picture enriched with his favorite decoration. I mean descriptions of fine scenery, droll costumes, village merry-makings, and perhaps he would have found some among our negroes not unfit to do kitchen work in a novel. Nor less favorable would be the retirement for a religious or moral philosopher if it were not too much for his patience, too much for his tranquility to bear the sight of so general laxity and too much for his skill and power to remedy. . . .

Your affectionate

Edward

[EDWARD BLISS EMERSON TO RALPH WALDO EMERSON (Boston)]

Pto Rico. June 29, 1834

Dear Waldo

. . . . You know that sometime since a statute was made in Spain, for the establishment of a legislature in two chambers, one of grantees



&c, the other of popular representatives, in short a modification of the Cortes (I believe without that name); and it pleased our authorities here to evince their gratitude for the said decree as a benefit conferred on the Nation by an amateur representation of a drama in the Theatre on the 19th & a ball on the 20th current. To the former I was fortunate enough to procure admission, and though the performance was dull enough in itself yet from the personages taking part, it was interesting. The Governor's wife was the principal actress; the next being one of the belles of the city. The Governor's Secretary (and virtual prime minister) D. Pedro Tomas Cordova was the principal actor and the rest were individuals well known amongst the people. . . .

Yrs E —

[CHARLES CHAUNCY EMERSON, "ONE OF THE WEST INDIES ISLANDS"; EXTRACTS FROM A LECTURE DELIVERED BEFORE THE CONCORD LYCEUM, JANUARY 9, 1833.]

. . . Only a single Newspaper is published in the Island, & that is a small quarto sheet containing extracts from orthodox works on geography & history — & for anything that appears in its columns all the world might have been asleep since the days of our grand parents. There are no schools except for small children, & I was told that it was accounted quite an accomplishment for a lady to be able to write. . . . The women are very comely in their features & forms, & remarkable for the brilliance of their dark eyes, & the delicate proportions of their feet & hands — They are affectionate & affable, & though great talkers are no wise given to slander —

We may see the character of people in their diversions as well as in their serious business. . . . The inhabitants of Porto Rico are very much addicted to sports. Like all Catholics they have a great number of holidays which are observed by a suspension of business & appropriate pastimes.

On the twenty third of June, St. John's day, the City is given up to festivity which lasts through two days & nights. Every householder is notified to hang a flag from his window — & gay processions go with pomp through the town — But the sport which by eminence belongs to this festival is a furious riding of men & even women & children on horseback through the principal streets of St Johns — And these equestrians are not the rabble but some of the most considerable of the place — & horses are brought from far & near & let for large prices to run in these "carreras" — No man shows mercy to himself or his beast, & as the streets are steep & narrow, it has repeatedly happened that horses & riders have been instantly killed by a sudden encounter. It may seem to us a foolish sport to excite so keen an interest — But if it be true, as Dr. Johnson last left on record, that life has few joys that compare with that of being whirled rapidly along in a post-chaise, — we can easily imagine that the less philosophic cavaliers of St Johns find an intoxicating pleasure in their impetuous motion which takes away the sense of fatigue & peril. . . .

A favorite diversion of the Spaniard in Porto Rico is kite flying. It



is not as in our country confined to children, but furnishes entertainment to grown men. The kites are of two kinds; the merchantmen — which go unarmed — & the privateers, so called, because to the tail of the kite is attached a knife blade for the purpose of attacking its neighbors in the air, & if possible cutting their strings. . . . A year or two since a company was formed for the purpose of engaging more sociably & on a larger scale in this amusement. . . . When 40 or 50 [kites] are raised at once, & wheeling & dodging like a flock of birds, the spectacle is certainly pretty however the occupation may appear to men of mature years & grave duties.

Balls & Dancing are the darling amusement of all classes — The slave forgets his bondage when he shuffles his feet to the everlasting monotony of the . . . rattle & the song of the negro women. But the dances of the Spanish gentry resemble the waltz — & are many of them difficult of execution, & it is considered extremely uncivil for one to engage in a dance who is unacquainted with the figure & causes embarrassment to his partners. . . .

The people of Porto Rico are much addicted to Billiards, Lotteries, Raffles, Cockfights & other species of gambling. . . A law was passed in the Mother Country prohibiting lotteries in the Spanish colonies — But to this law, Porto Rico would not listen & the governor was compelled return for answer his "Obedezco pero no cumplo". Every village has its cockpit, which on Sundays is thronged with spectators & gamblers — Many of the Priests are notorious cockfighters — & the most eminent physician in St. Johns has expended a large fortune upon his birds —

. . . . If they are not energetic enough in efforts to improve their condition, they are exceedingly good humored in tolerating all its disadvantages. They are a people of beautiful manners. They are constitutionally social. Their courtesy seems to be a constituent part of their language, so that one is sometimes puzzled to determine whether there is any merit due to the individuals for those expressions of politeness which they learned in their very grammars & dictionaries. — We know however that the character of a language is only a reflection of the character of the people which speak it. There was something very agreeable in the greetings of acquaintances in the streets — They never passed one another with hasty step & slight recognition as in our busy towns, but always found time for a hearty & affectionate salutation, for inquiries after the different members of their families, & messages of compliment when they parted. This looked to be sure as if they had nothing to do, but it looked also as if doing nothing had had a very good effect upon their tempers — Our streets are colder than those of St. Johns & a man may be excused for brushing quickly by his friend when the thermometer stands 20 or 30 degrees below freezing — but it must also be confessed that the manners of New Englanders are by no means their best part, & we might well learn of the West Indians to recommend ourselves to one another's regard by a more frank & cordial address.

. . . . The taxes are arbitrarily imposed & in amounts altogether out of proportion to the public exigencies — . . . The tax on a barrel of flour has been sometimes 9 dollars, & is ordinarily about 5. — (& one

dollar on every barrel is appropriated to the Theatre now building; & which in a city of 14000 inhabitants, will have cost when completed \$280,000 — ) Meanwhile there is not only not a good road in the Island, but nothing which answers to our idea of a road at all — their communication between plantations & towns being a little bridle way like the cowpaths in our pastures. . . .

There is a class of slaves who are found chiefly in the City & the villages whose situation is very different [from those in the field]. They are taught some simple trade & set up in business by their masters — who however interfere with them no farther than to take the profits of their labor, over & above what is necessary to their bare support. They live by themselves & manage their concerns according to their own discretion. These slaves under a milder yoke of servitude enjoying substantial personal liberty & freedom of action, are proportionally more intelligent & happy than those on the plantations — Indeed many of them are full as cheerful & industrious as if they called no man master & were making their own fortune instead of his. . . .

We of New England then have reason for gratitude that our lives have fallen to us in places where if the skies be less soft & vegetation less luxuriant, the frame is braced & the mind invigorated by the exertions they are called to make — . . . Our sterile soil & churlish atmosphere, are our best friends — they compel us to seek our resources within ourselves; they provoke the hands to labor & the mind to thought. They accustom us to difficulties & hardship & thus infuse into our tempers a spirit of patient & resolute action.

## TRABAJADOR OLVIDADO DEL SIGLO XX: EL ARTESANO

José A. Baquero

La revolución industrial que caracterizó la segunda mitad del Siglo XIX y que se ha intensificado en los años que han transcurrido del presente Siglo, ha traído como consecuencia un natural despertar de la conciencia social hacia las duras realidades del trabajador asalariado y se ha pronunciado en legislaciones más o menos avanzadas para proteger a dicho trabajador.

Todos los países del mundo occidental, cual más cual menos, han dictado códigos y leyes laborales y de seguridad social, con el propósito de defender al trabajador industrial frente a los intereses de la industria, permitiéndole no solamente equilibrar un tanto su posición en las negociaciones de los contratos colectivos de trabajo, mediante la organización de sindicatos y uniones, sino garantizándole salarios mínimos, la limitación de horas de trabajo, seguros de enfermedad, invalidez y fallecimiento, etc. Estas legislaciones, unas con visión de la realidad y otras un tanto exageradas con relación al medio en que deben aplicarse, tienen en común la profunda preocupación del Estado y de la sociedad en general, de aproximarse en la medida de lo posible a una situación de justicia social que permita el desenvolvimiento de la clase trabajadora hacia niveles humanos y dignos.

A su vez, los trabajadores industriales, conscientes de sus derechos y de las oportunidades que les brinda una legislación favorable, no han perdido el tiempo y se han apresurado a organizar sindicatos y asociaciones con gran vigor y energía, para mantener y aun progresar sus conquistas.

En este avance de la legislación social, sin embargo, existe un lunar que hasta cierto punto se ha mimetizado dentro de las conquistas generales de los trabajadores, pero que constituye una tremenda

omisión que puede acarrear graves consecuencias en el futuro. Esa omisión es el abandono en que se ha dejado al artesano, esto es al trabajador manual que, por su propia cuenta, mantiene un taller o practica una ocupación para atender a las necesidades de sus clientes.

Antes de la revolución industrial, durante muchos siglos, el artesano fué el unico trabajador que transformaba las materias primas y producía manufacturas destinadas a satisfacer las necesidades de todos. Desde el humilde alfarero productor de ollas de barro para la cocina del sencillo hogar, hasta el renombrado orfebre, autor de las coronas de reyes y príncipes, todos los artesanos contribuyeron durante centurias a la marcha y progreso de la humanidad. Con la aparición de la primera máquina el artesano perdió terreno, pues la fuerza de la máquina multiplicó la capacidad de producción individual a límites hasta entonces inconcebibles, y desde entonces el artesano y la máquina rivalizaron en todo terreno: desde la reducción de precios del artículo industrializado frente al artículo artesanal, hasta la calidad de ese artículo industrializado que jamás puede competir con el acabado artístico y perfecto del producto artesanal. La máquina despojó al artesano de su independencia, de la dignidad de su propio valer, del orgullo de su obra acabada, y lo redujo a competir con el trabajador inexperto y carente de iniciativa que, gracias a la división del trabajo, contribuye a la producción en proporciones cada vez más limitadas.

La realidad de la industria y el natural desalojo del artesano del mercado de competencia ha hecho pensar a muchos economistas y sociólogos que esta es una ley de la naturaleza contra la cual no se puede luchar y que mientras más pronto desaparezca el artesano, mejor servida estará la humanidad. Estos economistas y sociólogos, inspirados sobre todo en la tesis marxista, manifiestan que la existencia del artesano es un anacronismo que debe hacerse desaparecer a la brevedad posible, para dar paso a una sociedad puramente industrial que permita altos niveles de producción y pueda satisfacerse a las necesidades de todo el mundo.

Esta manera de mirar al problema del artesano es simplemente fruto de un prejuicio y una forma demasiado liviana de descartar de una plumada una realidad tan viva en el Siglo XX, como lo fué en la Edad Media. Es un prejuicio, porque se da por sentado principio de que el artesano debe desaparecer para dar paso al obrero industrial, sin mas trámite; y es una liviandad porque da por hecha la desaparición del artesano del medio industrial. Más aún, los economistas y sociólogos que siguen la línea marxista pretenden que todo empeño en defender o proteger efectivamente al artesano debe ser condenado como una

curiosa regresión a la "oscura" Edad Media y por tanto debe ser combatido enérgicamente.

Este punto de vista, si bien tiene su explicación en el campo de lo político, como vamos a verlo, no puede ser sostenido válidamente ni desde un punto de vista económico, ni desde un punto de vista sociológico.

La desaparición del artesanado es una tesis política del marxismo por una sencillísima razón. El marxismo considera a la lucha de clases como un medio inevitable y eficaz para llegar a la revolución y por tanto al trastorno del orden de cosas que se califica como "capitalismo explotador e imperialista." Aceptada esta premisa, es fácil colegir por qué el marxismo prefiere la desaparición del artesanado. El artesano es un trabajador independiente, que no recibe instrucciones ni órdenes sino de sus clientes en cuanto a la forma de realizar su trabajo, pero jamás está sujeto a patrón o jefe alguno. Por otra parte, el artesano, aunque trabaja duro y a veces tiene que resentir su salud por los esfuerzos que realiza, considera su independencia como el don más sagrado de su vida; además, en algunas ocasiones, su trabajo honrado le ha permitido ahorrar algo y lo ha hecho dueño de una casita, de un taller, de unas herramientas. Este hecho de ser pequeño propietario le convierte en una persona amante del orden y respetuosa de la propiedad ajena. Como tiene lo suficiente para vivir, aunque modestamente, no le interesa la agitación política y por tanto tiene una resistencia natural a la tesis marxista de la lucha de clases. El artesano pertenece a una clase social que puede aproximarse a la clase media de las sociedades modernas y por tanto constituye un elemento de equilibrio social y económico opuesto a la revolución. Por ello, la tesis marxista considera al artesano como a un burgués que debe ser combatido y arruinado si se quiere ver a la revolución triunfante. Desde el punto de vista político, por tanto, el marxismo tiene toda la razón al combatir al artesano y considerarlo como un peligro para la marcha de sus planes. En este sentido, el marxismo es lógico y consecuente consigo mismo.

En cambio, desde el punto de vista económico y desde el punto de vista sociológico la desaparición del artesano no es posible ni conveniente. Véamos por qué.

Económicamente el artesano no puede desaparecer por cuanto siempre habrá necesidad de hombres y mujeres técnicos que se responsabilicen de la producción, aún dentro de la misma industria. Además, artesanos existirán siempre para poder atender a las necesidades de construcciones, reparaciones y adaptaciones de toda clase, así como también para atender a toda clase de servicios que solo artesanos

pueden suplir. Así, por ejemplo, jamás se podrá prescindir de carpinteros, mecánicos, plomeros, zapateros, peluqueros, peinadores, etc. El artesano, en la sociedad moderna, es un complemento necesario de la industria y no tiene que ser necesariamente absorbido por tal industria. Más aún, la industria necesita del artesano para poder subsistir y progresar. Es muy difícil, si no imposible, contemplar la posibilidad de que un día el hombre regrese a su primitivo estado de hacerse todo por sí mismo, por más que día a día se simplifique el principio del "do it yourself" o "hágase usted mismo" que está tan de moda. Todavía en Nueva York, Tokio o Praga el carpintero tiene que cortar y armar puertas, ventanas y mesas, por más maquinarias con que cuente, y tiene que instalarlas donde deben ir.

Desde un punto de vista sociológico, hace falta que el hombre moderno mantenga por lo menos algo de su iniciativa creadora y pueda sentir la satisfacción de que está haciendo algo de provecho. Sociólogos y psicólogos están diariamente insistiendo en la necesidad de que el hombre moderno se despreocupe siquiera en parte de sus problemas rutinarios y adquiera intereses que le permitan redondear su personalidad. Por otra parte, la división de la sociedad en dos únicas clases sociales, la de los dueños o jefes de industrias y la de los obreros, es una tesis muy peligrosa. Las sociedades modernas tienen que tender al crecimiento y expansión de la clase media si se quiere vitalizar y vigorizar a la democracia, pues solamente la clase media puede mantener el equilibrio necesario para el adelanto de la sociedad en un sistema democrático; desaparecido el muelle entre los extremos, la reacción natural es la lucha de intereses y la intervención del Estado para el mantenimiento del orden en forma totalitaria, absoluta.

Por las razones que anteceden vemos cómo naciones altamente industrializadas tales como los Estados Unidos de América, Francia, los países escandinavos, etc. prestan una gran atención al problema artesanal, aunque no se lo llame precisamente por ese nombre. En los Estados Unidos, la Federación de Trabajadores AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations) cuenta entre sus miembros, que suman más de dieciseis millones, casi las dos terceras partes genuínos artesanos o trabajadores organizados según ramas de trabajo, y poco más de una tercera parte trabajadores organizados según las varias industrias. La AFL, antes de su asociación con la CIO para formar la nueva federación, estuvo constituida casi ciento por ciento de uniones de trabajadores especializados, organizados en ramas de trabajo artesanal tales como los carpinteros, varias clases de mecánicos, etc. y contribuyó a la formación de la nueva federación

con casi las dos terceras partes de sus miembros, o sea con más de diez millones de trabajadores. En Francia, los artesanos de Limoges especializados en la producción de una de las más finas lozas del mundo están organizados y protegidos por el Estado en forma admirable; en Dinamarca, Suecia, Alemania, las organizaciones artesanales tienen una fuerza extraordinaria y han probado que el artesanado no ha desaparecido ni está en vías de desaparecer en la vida industrial moderna.

Sin embargo, la legislación de los países mencionados y más aún, la legislación de los países subdesarrollados, ha ignorado en gran parte el problema del artesanado, para dedicarse a atender, justamente por cierto, al problema del obrero industrial. Pero tiempo es ya de que se preste más atención al artesano, si no se quiere que la civilización occidental sea presa de la gigantesca revolución social que predica y provoca el marxismo.

Por cierto, el grado de atención y la medida de las reformas que deben hacerse en las legislaciones varía enormemente de país a país, pues dependen de un sinnúmero de circunstancias. Sin embargo, existen países donde el problema artesanal es sumamente agudo y no admite demoras en su solución adecuada. Como ejemplo típico de tales países, hagamos un estudio especial del Ecuador.

El Ecuador es un país sudamericano que cuenta con cerca de cuatro millones de habitantes de los cuales por lo menos dos terceras partes son indígenas o tienen sangre indígena. Es montañoso y tropical, dedicado principalmente a la agricultura y a la ganadería, con muy poca industria y con la perspectiva de que, durante mucho tiempo, no podrá encontrar económicamente aconsejable una industrialización en grande escala. La mayor parte de la población trabajadora no agrícola se ha dedicado a la artesanía, mientras un pequeño porcentaje de tal población pertenece a la industria. En todas las ciudades ecuatorianas, grandes o pequeñas, encontramos en cada cuadra, talleres artesanales de toda clase: sastrerías, carpinterías, mecánicas, zapaterías, peluquerías, etc. Los artesanos dueños de talleres han llegado a poseer sus modestas herramientas a través de largos años de intenso trabajo, sacrificios y privaciones. Generalmente, esos artesanos tienen que pagar subidos arriendos por sus locales de trabajo que son al mismo tiempo taller, comedor y dormitorio de él y de su familia, y a veces también de sus aprendices y operarios. Este dueño de taller vive exclusivamente del trabajo que puedan darle sus clientes del barrio y, si es afortunado, de clientes algo más importantes que lo patrocinen por su especial habilidad. El artesano ha aprendido su oficio ya sea de su propio padre o de algún amigo de su padre que en años mozos lo recibió para enseñarle.



Los cursos oficiales de artes y oficios en las escuelas profesionales del Estado muchas veces son incompletos y poco satisfactorios; además, muy pocos alumnos pueden darse el lujo de asistir a tales cursos por cuanto el muchacho, en muy temprana edad, tiene que ganarse la vida y en la escuela no hay oportunidad de ganarse un salario, por pequeño que fuera. De allí es que la gran mayoría de los artesanos ecuatorianos no han tenido otra escuela profesional que el propio taller del maestro.

En estas condiciones, el artesano ecuatoriano ha venido formándose un hábito de autodisciplina y de responsabilidad muy notable, que le ha dado un grado de autoseguridad muy desarrollado.

El problema de la revolución industrial llegó al Ecuador bastante tarde. Antes de la apertura del Canal de Panamá, a principios de este Siglo, el Ecuador era prácticamente inaccesible como mercado. Solamente después de esa apertura y con el impulso dado al comercio mundial por la Primera Guerra Mundial llegó la industria extranjera a competir ventajosamente contra la producción artesanal ecuatoriana. Hasta entonces, esto es hacia el año 1920, la artesanía ecuatoriana había sido dueña absoluta de su propio mercado y había adquirido un alto nivel de desarrollo y perfección que todavía puede verse en los viejos maestros. Después de 1920, la importación de varios artículos tales como tejidos, muebles, etc. comenzó a hacer sentir un malestar en las filas artesanales, pero pudo seguir subsistiendo en forma más o menos cómoda durante varios años más, dada la pequeñez de las importaciones en esos años, así como también la holgada situación económica general y la que habían adquirido los artesanos durante las pasadas décadas, lo cual les permitía seguir viviendo con relativa comodidad.

La depresión económica mundial que se originó con la tremenda crisis de los Estados Unidos de Norte América de 1929 en adelante, hasta cerca de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, movió a los ecuatorianos a dictar una legislación social y laboral que protegiera a los intereses de los trabajadores. En esos años fueron dictados el Código del Trabajo y la Ley del Seguro Social Obligatorio, con disposiciones precisas acerca de los derechos de los trabajadores al contrato colectivo del trabajo, al salario mínimo, a las indemnizaciones y al seguro de vejez, invalidez, enfermedad y fallecimiento.

La legislación del trabajo fué inspirada en el Código mexicano y contiene disposiciones muy avanzadas de protección industrial quizá adecuadas para la realidad mexicana, pero poco adaptables, algunas de ellas, a la realidad ecuatoriana. Ese Código fué dictado con rapidez vertiginosa gracias a presiones ejercidas por los grupos políticos imperantes en 1938, en un período de transición y desde entonces se ha



convertido en una muralla invulnerable e intocable que nadie se atreve a remover, ni siquiera con el propósito de mejorarla en favor de los trabajadores. En ese Código fué en dónde se consumó la condena a muerte del artesano ecuatoriano cuando se legisló en el sentido de que el maestro del taller tiene respecto de sus operarios y aprendices las mismas obligaciones que el patrono en general; esta disposición fué completada con las regulaciones dictadas en la legislación del Seguro Social Obligatorio y aplicadas por la Caja del Seguro, regulaciones según las cuales el maestro del taller debía contribuir al seguro de sus trabajadores en exactamente la misma medida que el patrono industrial.

Aunque aparentemente inocentes tales disposiciones, entrañaban una gran injusticia no solo jurídica sino social y económica al poner en el mismo plano al artesano y al patrono industrial, por cuanto existen diferencias fundamentales entre los dos, como vamos a probarlo.

En primer lugar, el artesano tiene, por lo general, en un 95% de los casos, una situación económica sumamente estrecha y por tanto en nada comparable al dueño de una fábrica, sea este una persona o una compañía. La capacidad económica es tan desproporcionada, por pequeño que sea el capital de una industria, que el artesano, de hecho, quedaba en inferioridad de condiciones frente al patrono industrial.

En segundo lugar, las condiciones de trabajo de un artesano y las de un patrono industrial son enteramente distintas, pues mientras el artesano está contribuyendo constantemente no sólo con la dirección de la obra, sino también con su trabajo manual, el patrono se limita por regla general a sus funciones de dirigir la marcha de su fábrica. Mientras el artesano pone toda su habilidad y su esfuerzo personal en la transformación de la materia prima o en la realización del servicio, el patrono industrial es un simple gerente o jefe de operaciones de su fábrica.

En tercer lugar, la situación de los trabajadores asalariados industriales es enteramente, fundamentalmente, diferente de la situación de los operarios y aprendices artesanales. Mientras los trabajadores asalariados han contratado sus servicios por un salario fijo y no tienen casi ningún interés personal en la marcha misma de la empresa, los operarios y aprendices tienen íntima vinculación con el maestro del taller y el porvenir del mismo está vinculado estrechamente a sus propios intereses. El operario de hoy es el maestro de mañana, de la misma manera que el aprendiz de hoy es el operario de mañana. El taller no es solamente un lugar de trabajo sino una escuela de formación profesional, un laboratorio de experimentación de donde saldrá el futuro maestro. Y así como sería absurdo considerar que los alumnos

universitarios tienen derechos derivados de relaciones de trabajo con respecto a su Universidad por los trabajos de investigación que puedan realizar en el curso de sus estudios, es igualmente absurdo equiparar la condición de los operarios y aprendices a la de los trabajadores asalariados.

Quizá en el Siglo XX en que vivimos estas realidades sean algo confusas de comprender, ya que estamos acostumbrados a las simplificaciones de todo género. Sin embargo, es necesario desbrozar un poco las apariencias para entrar en la realidad de los hechos y juzgarlos como son y no como deben ser. Así por ejemplo, algunos grupos políticos de izquierda y de extrema derecha han puesto el grito en el cielo manifestando que, de no reconocerse los derechos de los aprendices y operarios al seguro social obligatorio o a las indemnizaciones des los accidentes del trabajo, la legislación ecuatoriana estaría retrocediendo a las oscuras épocas—así llamadas—del medioevo. Sin embargo, tales ataques son injustificados, como vamos a probarlo a lo largo de este estudio.

Ante las tremendas consecuencias que acarreó la aplicación del Código del Trabajo y la Ley del Seguro Social Obligatorio, la artesanía ecuatoriana tuvo que ponerse de pie y defender sus intereses, su misma supervivencia, en forma ordenada y legal, pero haciendo frente no sólo a los extremistas de izquierda, sino a los indiferentes liberales y a los celosos extremistas de derecha que veían en un movimiento artesanal una simple organización de tipo político desligado de las directivas conservadoras o de otros organismos políticos de esa tendencia, organización que era necesario infiltrar para dominar o destruir.

Veamos algunos de los pasos que condujeron a la legislación de defensa artesanal en el Ecuador, para que podamos vislumbrar su alcance y proporciones.

Iniciada la legislación del trabajo y del seguro social, no tardaron algunos agitadores profesionales y algunos profesionales inescrupulosos a aprovecharse de tal legislación para satisfacer mezquinos intereses personales. Hasta entonces, el aprendiz y el operario se habían considerado parte del taller artesanal, protegidos y hasta familiares del maestro. La nueva legislación les abrió la oportunidad para la envidia y la ambición. Muchos jovencitos quisieron adueñarse del taller en poco tiempo o simplemente quisieron un poco de dinero para divertirse a costo del maestro. No faltaron accidentes premeditados con el objeto de coleccionar indemnizaciones; no faltaron juicios iniciados por operarios o aprendices altaneros que provocaron ser despedidos de sus maestros, por despido intempestivo. La Caja del Seguro, celosísima vigilante del

pago de aportes, no esperaba ni daba tregua al pobre maestro artesano que se atrasaba en el pago de aportes y fondos de reserva. Como consecuencia, decenas y centenares de talleres artesanales tuvieron que cerrar sus puertas, arrojando a la miseria al maestro, muchas veces ya cansado y viejo, y a sus familias. La situación llegó a tal extremo, que ciudades enteras, como la de Cotacachi, en la Provincia de Imbabura, acreditada por el arte de la talabartería, tenía apostados vigilantes para que denunciaran la presencia de los empleados del seguro, a fin de cerrar todas las casas al menor indicio de presencia del odiado colector de aportes y fondos de reserva que, por lo demás, poco servicio prestaba a los afiliados al seguro.

Esta situación duró varios años en los cuales miles de artesanos sufrieron el peso de la injusticia impuesta sobre ellos por una legislación inconsulta. El año de 1949, algunos dirigentes artesanales lograron reunir un Congreso Artesanal en la ciudad de Guayaquil, con el objeto de protestar por la situación de discriminación en que se encontraban y para pedir que se dictara una legislación más benigna que les permitiera seguir viviendo. Después de muchos esfuerzos, consiguieron que el Congreso Nacional aprobara un Decreto muy incompleto de defensa artesanal, Decreto que tuvo la mala suerte de ser vetado por la Presidencia de la República y que no entró en vigencia sino después de insistencia del Congreso.

El Decreto en cuestión contenía ciertas disposiciones mediante las cuales se liberaba al artesano de algunas cargas impositivas ya contempladas, por lo demás, en la legislación general de impuesto a la renta y limitó en forma por demás absurda y exagerada el concepto de artesano no sólo en lo referente al valor del taller artesanal, inclusive herramientas, muebles y materia prima, sino también en cuanto al número de operarios y aprendices y al monto de su producción. Este Decreto, lejos de producir beneficios prácticos al artesano, sentó un serio precedente legal que hasta ahora no ha sido posible corregirse, pese a los esfuerzos realizados; además, en lo poco de beneficioso que pudo tener, casi no llegó a tener aplicación práctica por el desconocimiento que de él tuvieron los artesanos y por el corto tiempo de su vigencia.

En 1952, al terminarse el período presidencial del señor Galo Plaza e inaugurarse el del doctor J. M. Velasco Ibarra, quien por tercera vez llegaba a la Presidencia de la República, un nuevo ambiente propicio a la causa artesanal pareció surgir y poco antes de la reunión del Congreso Nacional, a iniciativa de uno de los nuevos Diputados elegidos ese año, comenzó a circular la invitación a todos los artesanos interesados

en una legislación completa que presentaran sus puntos de vista sobre el problema. Los sastres quiteños acogieron la iniciativa inmediatamente y fué en el local de la Sociedad de Maestros Sastres Luz y Progreso donde se inició una serie de asambleas públicas para discutir un proyecto de nueva ley. Una vez elaborado el proyecto se lo hizo conocer por la prensa a todo el artesanado de la República y se solicitó sus comentarios. Recibidos los comentarios y analizados punto por punto, se presentó el proyecto definitivo de Ley de Defensa del Artesano en la Cámara de Diputados. Después de dura lucha que tomó varias sesiones de la Cámara, contra la oposición tenaz de los Diputados representantes de la tesis marxista, el proyecto fué aprobado con ligeras modificaciones. En la Cámara del Senado el proyecto fué sometido a toda clase de escrutinios y análisis y después de ligero debate se lo archivó por improcedente, en el período de sesiones de 1952.

Al año siguiente, esto es en 1953, la artesanía volvió a despertarse de su letargo y se inició una gran campaña para que el Senado desempolvase el proyecto archivado y se lo pusiese nuevamente a discusión. En esta oportunidad, el Senador por los Trabajadores de la Costa, miembro prominente del Partido Comunista, movió toda clase de recursos para destruir el proyecto y cuando se vió que la Ley iba a ser aprobada de todas maneras, gracias a la enérgica intervención del artesanado de toda la República, dicho Senador tuvo la habilidad de introducir reformas sustanciales que limitaban la proyección de la Ley a los moldes del Decreto de 1949, se negaba la ayuda del Estado para el Seguro Social de los artesanos, operarios y aprendices y, en general, se dejaba inoperante la acción de la nueva Ley. Sin embargo, fué posible mantener un aspecto de la nueva Ley y ese fué la creación de la Junta Nacional de Defensa del Artesano, organismo encargado de velar por el cumplimiento, aplicación y reglamentación de la nueva Ley. Además, fué posible mantener también otra gran conquista sobre la legislación anterior, ésta es la de volver al artesano maestro de taller a su verdadero sitio de trabajador manual y no de patrono, y por tanto se lo libera de las cargas patronales señaladas tanto en el Código del Trabajo como en la legislación del Seguro Social Obligatorio. Asimismo, se establece el principio de la defensa de clase mediante la titulación y se fomenta la creación de escuelas profesionales y de cooperativas.

El objeto primordial de la nueva Ley tenía varios matices, todos destinados a la supervivencia de la clase artesanal, para permitirle transformarse paulatinamente en una clase trabajadora propietaria de la pequeña industria, mediante la organización del sistema cooperativo. Esos varios matices o aspectos pueden ser estudiados desde los siguientes puntos de vista:

A. Creación de una conciencia de clase y B) Protección gubernamental para llevar a cabo el programa de mejoramiento y transformación de esa clase.

Analicemos estos dos aspectos.

A. — Creación de una conciencia de clase. La artesanía ecuatoriana, al igual que todas las artesanías del mundo entero, se ha caracterizado fundamentalmente por el espíritu de independencia e individualismo. El artesano, por regla general, ha sido siempre un individuo muy apegado a su familia y a su pequeño círculo barrial o parroquial y poco aficionado al espíritu gregario o de asociación. El sistema gremial, tradicionalmente, no ha hecho otra cosa que arraigar mas profundamente las distinciones entre los artesanos pertenecientes al mismo, por más que el espíritu de solidaridad y de mútua defensa de intereses haya sido siempre el motivo o el motor inicial de las asociaciones gremiales. Al artesano le ha faltado el acicate inmediato del estímulo diario de contacto y el peligro omnipresente de la desocupación, que caracterizan al trabajador asalariado y que le han impulsado a organizar sus sindicatos o uniones. Por el contrario, el artesano se ha visto frecuentemente forzado a considerar al colega de su oficio como un competidor o adversario en el campo profesional y por tanto sus relaciones con los artesanos de la misma rama han sido siempre calculadas y más o menos frías; asimismo, en el caso del artesano, el peligro de la desocupación tanto o más agudo que en el caso del asalariado no ha tenido ni tiene el mismo carácter dramático del despido y por ello ese peligro aparece al artesano en forma más o menos remota. Finalmente, por ser los artesanos los elementos trabajadores de más prestigio y preparación, por regla general, han sido seleccionados y se mantienen como dirigentes de organizaciones preponderantemente obreriles, atraídos por la misteriosa fuerza del sentido de autoridad. Partidos políticos inescrupulosos se han aprovechado de los dirigentes artesanales para que encabezaran movimientos revolucionarios o semi-revolucionarios de tendencias marcadamente políticas, incitando al artesano y al trabajador en general a descuidarse de sus propios problemas para dedicarse a actividades que en nada favorecen a su propia causa, pero que en cambio son útiles a tales partidos huérfanos de apoyo popular.

Por las razones que anteceden, era pues, imprescindible, crear en primer término una conciencia de clase y aprovechar los dirigentes más responsables para que a su vez crearan nuevos dirigentes de esta causa esencialmente laboral, y alejada del partidismo político.

Como era de esperarse, los Partidos políticos apuntalados en los elementos artesanales engañados de su propio destino, en primer lugar, y todos los demás Partidos celosos de cualquier competencia en el

campo doctrinario y político, desplegaron toda clase de actividades para impedir la formación de esta conciencia de clase, indispensable para sentar las bases del futuro artesanal. Después de vencer muchas dificultades llegó a crearse un órgano de prensa que, apropiadamente se conoció con el nombre de "El Artesano", el cual durante cinco años sirvió para la creación de esa conciencia, mediante la información periódica de todos los acontecimientos que interesaban a la clase artesanal. En varias ciudades de la República se crearon programas radiales que todavía se mantienen en el aire por los esfuerzos de los dirigentes artesanales. La prensa del país, temerosa de la creación de una nueva fuerza independiente, se ha limitado a dar informaciones esporádicas y muy incompletas del movimiento, pero en fin, ya le reconoce por lo menos existencia.

La Confederación de Artesanos Profesionales del Ecuador, organismo creado por el Primer Congreso Artesanal de Guayaquil, en 1949, ha tomado sobre sus hombros la dura e ingrata tarea de continuar la creación de nuevos sindicatos, uniones y asociaciones artesanales y nuevas Federaciones Provinciales. Para ello, ha tenido que vencer enormes dificultades, prejuicios, resistencias y ataques hasta físicos de parte de organismos rivales en el campo laboral.

Felizmente, la lucha sin cuartel que se ha hecho contra la clase artesanal, contra su Ley y contra sus exponentes, ha sido quizá el factor más importante para la formación de esa conciencia. El artesano ha llegado a darse cuenta de que si tiene tantos adversarios para su supervivencia y progreso, algún valor intrínseco debe tener la clase artesanal, como tal, y que por tanto bien vale la pena seguir luchando por mantener su personalidad propia. Los artesanos se han llegado a dar cuenta de que si fuera verdad de que están condenados a desaparecer indefectiblemente, nadie se preocuparía de ellos ya que serían una fuerza descompuesta y marchita; pero los ataques de que son víctimas, la virulencia de la lucha por controlar y desviar al movimiento artesanal de su propio curso, son indicaciones inequívocas de su gran vitalidad. La conciencia de clase formada y adquirida por los artesanos en el curso de los últimos diez años se ha probado ya en el hecho de que pese a la desaparición de su órgano de prensa y pese a la falta de apoyo, pese aún a todos los esfuerzos por destruir esa conciencia, la clase artesanal sigue adelante en su empeño y anhelo de reivindicaciones, con sus dirigentes propios, sin hacer caso los llamados de las falsas sirenas de la política.

#### B. Protección gubernamental.

El segundo aspecto contemplado en la legislación artesanal ha sido el de dar la protección necesaria por parte del Estado para que la clase



artesanal pueda subsistir y transformarse paulatinamente en una clase propietaria de la pequeña industria.

La protección gubernamental se ha reducido hasta ahora a la existencia de la Junta Nacional de Defensa del Artesano, órgano creado por la Ley para vigilar la aplicación de los principios establecidos por ella en favor de los artesanos, y velar por sus intereses.

Sin duda alguna, esta conquista es la base del progreso hasta hoy realizado en el Ecuador en esta materia. La Junta, compuesta por cuatro artesanos y tres representantes del Poder Público en esta forma: uno de la Legislatura, uno del Ejecutivo y uno del Instituto Nacional de Previsión, ha venido a ser el núcleo en derredor del cual ha girado el problema artesanal desde el mes de abril de 1954. La Junta, con gran sacrificio de parte de sus miembros, comenzó por dictar los Reglamentos necesarios para su propio desenvolvimiento. Largas y continuas sesiones de meses enteros fueron necesarias para la aprobación del Reglamento General, del Reglamento de Elecciones, de varios Reglamentos de titulación, del Reglamento de Calificaciones, etc. Después de continuos esfuerzos, sin remuneración pecuniaria de ninguna clase, el problema tenía que ser llevado al Ministerio de Previsión Social y Trabajo, para su aprobación. Allí, los Reglamentos y Resoluciones de la Junta han dormido a veces un año entero y sólo la paciencia, tino y constancia han podido permitir él que se pueda dar un paso adelante. Mirando todos los problemas que la Junta ha tenido que vencer hasta ahora y que tiene que seguir venciendo, el observador imparcial no puede menos de admirar la fe inquebrantable de los dirigentes artesanales en la eficacia de su obra, ya que ni la calumnia, ni el desprecio, ni el ataque personal, ni la represalia política, les ha impedido seguir adelante con su obra, que muchas veces ha estado a punto de zozobrar. Ante tal contemplación, el observador imparcial no puede menos que convenir que, de no haberse creado la Junta Nacional de Defensa del Artesano, la legislación artesanal sería otra letra muerta, como tantas, en las legislaciones del mundo.

Pero la Junta no ha estado sola en su labor de organización y defensa de clase; conforme a Ley ha estado autorizada y ha hecho uso de esa autorización para crear varias Juntas Regionales de Defensa del Artesano, que dentro de sus respectivas jurisdicciones han estado encargadas de resolver los problemas artesanales más urgentes. Hasta el momento, se han creado siete de tales Juntas Regionales que han dado magníficos frutos. Así como la Junta Nacional está en completa armonía y en íntimo contacto con el Consejo Ejecutivo de la Confederación de Artesanos Profesionales del Ecuador, cuya sede es Quito, también las Juntas Regionales mantienen íntimo contacto con las Federaciones e institu-

cionales artesanales de toda índole dentro de sus respectivas jurisdicciones.

Una de las actividades más importantes de la Junta Nacional ha sido la de las calificaciones. De acuerdo con la Ley, todo artesano que quiera ser protegido por ella, tiene que sujetarse al requisito de calificación. La calificación consiste en un certificado expedido por la Junta, en el cual se hace constar que el peticionario ha cumplido con todos los requisitos de la Ley para ser declarado artesano. Para llegar a dictar la resolución correspondiente, la Junta cuenta con un equipo de investigadores quienes se sujetan a un formulario redactado de conformidad con la Ley y Reglamentos. En caso de duda, la Junta puede ordenar cuantas investigaciones sean necesarias y dicta su fallo favorable o desfavorable, del cual se puede apelar ante el Ministerio de Previsión Social y Trabajo. El artesano que ha sido calificado goza de los siguientes beneficios: a) exoneración de impuestos más generosa que lo es para el ciudadano en general; b) tratamiento privilegiado para la exportación de artículos artesanales; c) tratamiento privilegiado para la importación de herramientas y artículos artesanales; d) tratamiento favorable para la concesión de préstamos en el Sistema de Bancos de Fomento; e) Preferencia en la compra de artículos por parte de Instituciones u Organismos del Estado; f) Liberación de imposiciones patronales a la Caja del Seguro y de las obligaciones patronales en general, con excepción del salario mínimo, de las indemnizaciones debidas por despido intempestivo, y de la concesión de vacaciones y horas limitadas de trabajo a los operarios y aprendices.

Desgraciadamente, cada uno de los puntos arriba indicados, han sido materia de dura lucha, por parte de la Junta, para hacerlos respetar. Muchas ocasiones han sido necesarias asambleas masivas de artesanos con el objeto de llamar la atención del Poder Público para el cumplimiento de las obligaciones estatales respecto de los artesanos. Algo se ha conseguido, pero todavía falta mucho por hacerse para que la Ley sea cumplida íntegramente. La Caja del Seguro, muchas ocasiones, ha tenido serios reparos y resistencia para reconocer los derechos adquiridos por los artesanos conforme a Ley, y la Junta ha tenido que protestar vigorosamente para que tales derechos sean respetados. El Ministerio del Tesoro, asimismo, se ha mostrado a veces muy terco en el reconocimiento de los derechos de los artesanos, aludiendo a casos muy aislados de abusos o de naturales errores en la aplicación de la Ley. El ambiente es, por tanto, todavía desfavorable a la aplicación de la Ley, debido a los prejuicios y presiones en gran parte de tipo político que todavía no logran vencerse completamente.



Otro de los puntos en los cuales la Junta ha venido insistiendo, conforme a Ley, ha sido la incorporación del artesano, del operario y del aprendiz al Seguro Social Obligatorio, mediante la contribución del Estado. En el proyecto original sometido a la Cámara de Diputados se contemplaba la participación de determinados impuestos que permitieran la financiación del seguro social artesanal, en forma escalonada; ese proyecto fué sometido al estudio del Instituto Nacional de Previsión el cual lo rechazó originalmente y luego hizo algunas modificaciones sustanciales que ponían al artesano en situación de desventaja frente a los demás afiliados al Seguro; así por ejemplo, mientras al afiliado no artesanal, de cualquier clase, que en forma voluntaria quisiese afiliarse al seguro, se le cobraba un máximo del 12% mensual de aportes para la obtención de todas las prestaciones que ofrece el seguro; en el caso del artesano, se estableció que el afiliado debía contribuir el 8% de aporte personal más el 13% de aporte del Estado, lo cual volvió imposible y absurdo el cumplimiento de la Ley; además, se suprimió la obligatoriedad de la afiliación de operarios y aprendices al seguro, en iguales condiciones que el maestro de taller, omisión que ha servido para una línea de ataque constante por parte de los enemigos de la Ley. Pese a los esfuerzos de la Junta en esta importantísima materia, no ha podido darse un solo paso efectivo para la resolución de este problema. Inclusive ha llegado a elaborarse anteproyectos de un seguro artesanal propio, que contaría con el respaldo de todo el artesanado nacional, pero que tiene sus tremendas dificultades de índole técnico. A todo esto, el Estado no ha contribuido en forma eficaz alguna para que se resuelva el conflicto.

La Junta se ha preocupado también de organizar, con el apoyo de algunas asociaciones artesanales, cursos rápidos de capacitación profesional que han dado magníficos resultados. Asimismo, se halla empeñada en que los institutos oficiales de enseñanza técnica se preocupen más y más de este asunto, para poder resolver, en el curso de unos pocos años, el grave problema del empirismo profesional, que es uno de los peores enemigos de la causa artesanal.

Asimismo, la Junta ha aprovechado los servicios y consejos de técnicos de las Naciones Unidas y de la Organización de los Estados Americanos para dar un impulso a la creación y desarrollo de cooperativas artesanales que permitan a los artesanos dar el paso definitivo del tipo de producción a que están acostumbrados, muy inadecuado para las circunstancias modernas, hacia el tipo de producción de la pequeña industria, sin perder su autonomía ni su condición de pequeños propietarios.

Otro problema importante que ha tenido que enfrentar la Junta

ha sido él de extender, conforme al espíritu de la Ley, los beneficios de la misma, a algunas ramas de trabajo que no fueron incorporadas originalmente a esta legislación. Asimismo, ha creído del caso elevar los capitales máximos en algunas ramas del trabajo, para poder ponerlas en un nivel de realidad y justicia.

Finalmente, con la cooperación de algunos municipios, la Junta ha podido crear almacenes artesanales destinados a proveer a los artesanos de locales que les permita exhibir sus productos, en lugares accesibles al turismo y al comercio en general, sacándolos de los humildes barrios y lugares en donde muchas veces se ocultaban verdaderos tesoros de arte.

Pero este paso, lo mismo que todos los anteriores, ha tenido que darse después de paciente esfuerzo, de largas discusiones y persuasión, y de varios errores cometidos por falta de experiencia y de apoyo técnico en esta materia. Sin embargo, la obra sigue su curso, y el artesanado ecuatoriano quizá es único ejemplo entre los países subdesarrollados de haber prestado atención a este importante problema. Mucho queda por hacerse, ciertamente, y después de diez años de labor se puede decir que el movimiento iniciado en 1949, apenas ha comenzado a dar frutos, pero los cimientos están echados y la obra de regeneración del artesanado ecuatoriano es sólo cuestión de paciencia y de tiempo.

¿Qué repercusiones podrá tener un movimiento artesanal vigoroso y bien organizado?

En primer lugar, desaparecerá el inminente peligro de proletarianización de las masas trabajadoras, con el consecuente resultado de trastornos económicos, sociales y políticos. En segundo lugar, al ampliarse la capacidad económica de esta clase media, y al robustecerse la propiedad de la pequeña industria en manos de esta clase, se eliminarán las fricciones que producen la lucha de clases y por tanto se eliminará el peligro de una revolución social. En tercer lugar, se permitirá al país salir de un sistema primitivo de producción a uno más adecuado a las conveniencias modernas; si a esta transformación artesanal se acompaña adecuada legislación agraria e industrial, se resolverá en forma pacífica y se impulsará el cambio de una economía subdesarrollada a una economía compatible con las exigencias de la vida moderna. Tales como se encuentran las circunstancias en el momento actual y tales como se encontraran tales circunstancias en un futuro más o menos cercano, no parece posible que el Ecuador pueda transformarse en una gran potencia industrial ya que carece de elementos humanos y naturales y de circunstancias económicas que le permitan tal trans-

formación. En cambio, es muy posible y factible que pueda elevar su nivel de producción, su ingreso nacional, mediante la pequeña industria, en forma tal que su economía no se limite exclusivamente al cultivo de artículos exportables ni dependa casi en absoluto de la importación de manufacturas extranjeras. Este paso paulatino a la pequeña industria traería como consecuencia, también, una mejor distribución de la riqueza y del ingreso nacionales, sin caer en extremos de ninguna clase. Finalmente, al robustecerse la economía nacional y obtenerse un equilibrio social, el Estado en general podría dedicar todos sus esfuerzos a obras creadoras y de aliento, sin tener que preocuparse fundamentalmente del mantenimiento del orden público, ni de obras de beneficencia y protección social, como en la actualidad.

Mucho queda por hacerse, es verdad, pero el primer paso ha sido dado. Ojalá que los países subdesarrollados prestaran mayor atención al trabajador olvidado del siglo XX: el artesano.



## APUNTACIONES SOBRE BOLIVAR: CRITICO

Luis E. Avilés

Por los años de 1883 decíase en *La Verdad* de Bogotá con referencia a Bolívar: "Acaso el distintivo más característico de la grandeza de los hombres, es la variedad de las facultades que constituyen su genio. De esta variedad provienen principalmente sus más insignes cualidades, así como sus defectos; porque de la combinación de facultades diversas, que todo lo abarcan, resultan de ordinario, tanto en la mente misma y en el temperamento como en el carácter, contrastes que, considerados desde un punto de vista, son armonías, y desde otro, son disonancias y aún contradicciones."<sup>1</sup>

Rebuscando pues, ex profeso, y confrontando de lleno las diversas y poderosas facultades que hacen patente los quilates de universalidad en el *Libertador*, encuéntrase que, en su admirable polifacetismo, brota un aspecto de suyo interesantísimo; y esta disposición, por parecer ajena a los hechos trascendentales obrados por él en el drama político-militar, pásase ora inadvertido por los más, ya debilmente enfocado por tal cual otra autoridad bolivariana al delinear la contextura intelectual del prócer.

En nuestro caso, y aplicable exclusivamente al asunto que nos proponemos elucidar, señalamos una vez más el inconcuso y aceptado fallo que atañe a la innegable grandeza militar de Bolívar, su humanitario concepto de emancipador del hombre americano y su virtuosa capacidad de visionario en cuanto a la organización de pueblos libres con razonadas constituciones para los mismos. Cuadra aquí traer a colación, y a manera de parodia, aquel atinadísimo juicio que sobre Cervantes y su obra, *Quijote*, formulara el eminente y sabio hombre de letras argentinas, Don Ricardo Rojas, al efecto de que, cuanto hemos

<sup>1</sup>Sampere, J. M. en *La Verdad*, Bogotá, julio 24 de 1883.

indicado sobre el *Libertador* "ha deslumbrado a los críticos, privándoles de ver otros aspectos . . . dignos de ser vistos, sin embargo, porque todos explican la complejidad y unidad de su genio."<sup>2</sup>

Los distingos aristocráticos de Bolívar, la sólida lectura y conocimientos de modernas y antiguas literaturas, según confesión propia,<sup>3</sup> el buen gusto, por adoctrinamiento y experiencia, su exuberante a la par que cálida y razonada elocuencia oratoria y parlamentaria, y su misma condición de original y poético creador, todo, todo, le hacía apto para la crítica.

Háse dicho, más de una vez, que en algunos hombres impera el fuerte instinto de poder penetrar en las íntimas reconditeces del corazón humano, de poder descifrar sus misterios y hacer el análisis de los sentimientos y diversas facultades de aquellos que le rodean a base de una moral equilibrada y justiciera. No infrecuentemente surgió en Bolívar esta inusitada tendencia a delinear personajes, a trazar una pintura anímica de los mismos, realizándolo vía fáciles y acertadas pinceladas que se distinguen por lo sintético y preciso de los conceptos, por lo definitivo de las conclusiones, y con aquella maestría que nos lleva a través de los tiempos a visualizar el apogeo de La Rochefoucauld, La Bruyère y Vauvenargues, cuando el género de introspección que el autor de las *Provinciales* tanto idealizara, se representara en otra esfera no menos digna aunque más profana, cuando predominaba en las letras francesas el afán por los *Caracteres* y las *Máximas*. Perú de Lacroix, edecán de Bolívar y secretario suyo en los aciagos días de Bucaramanga, tuvo el acierto de consignar:

El *Libertador* posee agudeza extremada de talento y de sentido crítico para hacer un retrato moral; sus pinceladas son rápidas, enérgicas y verdaderas. En pocas palabras hace conocer al individuo de quien se ocupa.<sup>4</sup>

Así, de Santander dice el *Libertador* por los años de 1827, período cuando acrecentaban las desavenencias personales y amenazaba contra Colombia el pujante separatismo, cuando no se podía "soportar la pérfida ingratitud" del vicepresidente:

. . . no quiero . . . darle el título de amigo . . . ¡Ingrato mil veces!!!<sup>5</sup>

¡Lo que son las mudanzas del tiempo y las veleidades de la vida! El

<sup>2</sup>Rojas, Ricardo, *Cervantes*, Buenos Aires, 1948, p. 143.

<sup>3</sup>Véase *Cartas del Libertador* (10 ts., Ed. Vicente Lecuna), t. IV, Caracas, 1929, pp. 337-338.

<sup>4</sup>Lacroix, Perú de, *Diario de Bucaramanga*, Ed. acrisolada de Mons. Nicolás E. Navarro, Caracas, 1949, p. 72.

<sup>5</sup>*Cartas*, t. VI, pp. 231-232.

Santander de este entonces no es ya más aquél cuyos talentos y virtudes ofrecían a la República el éxito más completo.<sup>6</sup> En el caso de Sucre, los conceptos y detalles se amplían marcadamente:

... es la cabeza mejor organizada de Colombia; es metódico y capaz de las más altas concepciones: es el mejor General de la República y su primer hombre de Estado. Sus principios son excelentes y fijos; su moralidad es ejemplar y tiene el alma grande y fuerte. Sabe persuadir y conducir a los hombres; los sabe juzgar, y si en política no es un defecto el juzgarles peores de lo que son en realidad, el General Sucre tiene el de manifestar demasiado el juicio desfavorable que hace ellos. Otro defecto del General Sucre es el de querer mostrarse demasiado sencillo, demasiado popular y no saber ocultar bien que realmente no lo es. ¡Pero cuan ligeras sombras sobre tantos méritos y virtudes! Casi no aparecen y para percibirlas se requiere un ojo bien observador. A todo esto añadiré que el Gran Mariscal de Ayacucho es el valiente de los valientes, el leal de los leales, el amigo de las leyes y no del despotismo, el partidario del orden, el enemigo de la anarquía y finalmente un verdadero liberal.<sup>7</sup>

Estas frases, desde luego, son justificadas y comprensibles ya que el de Ayacucho, según el pésame que extendía Bolívar a la viuda de este malogrado héroe, fué siempre el "digno amigo, merecedor de eterna gratitud por su lealtad, su estimación, y sus servicios."<sup>8</sup>

Lo más de las observaciones que hemos apuntado se comentaba en Bucaramanga, en el seno del cortejo del *Libertador*, en situaciones donde se mezclaban conversaciones de interés familiar con negocios de Estado. Aquí también, llegadas a Bolívar dolientes noticias de las miserias porque cursaba la patria venezolana, señalábase a Páez con palabras de este tenor:

... el hombre más ambicioso y más vano del mundo: no quiere obedecer sino mandar... no conoce su nulidad; el orgullo de su ignorancia lo ciega. Siempre será una máquina de sus consejeros y las voces de mando sólo pasarán por su boca, pues vendrán de otra voluntad que la suya: yo le conceptúo el hombre más peligroso de Colombia... es un llanero tan tosco, tan artero, tan falso y tan desconfiado que es preciso conocerle bien para poder dirigirlo.<sup>9</sup>

Hay más. En cierta ocasión, pasóse en revista toda la nobleza cara-

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid*, t. II, p. 396.

<sup>7</sup>*Diario*, pp. 68-69.

<sup>8</sup>*Cartas*, t. IX, p. 281.

<sup>9</sup>*Diario*, pp. 70-71, 169.

queña y tocóle ser enjuiciado al General de División Francisco Rodríguez Toro:

. . . el prototipo de la franqueza, de la amenidad y jovialidad de nuestros buenos antepasados: es verdaderamente noble en sus sentimientos, en su conducta, como lo es de nacimiento: nadie más generoso, más servicial y mejor amigo . . .<sup>10</sup>

Aduzcamos por ende, el caso del General Flores, encargado de los ejércitos del Sur en los tiempos de la Convención de Ocaña:

. . . yo conozco a Flores mejor que nadie . . . pocos en Colombia pueden ganar al Gral. Flores en astucia, sutilezas de guerra y políticas, en el arte de la intriga y en ambición: tiene un gran talento natural que está desarrollando él mismo por medio del estudio y de la reflexión: sólo ha fallado a Flores el nacimiento y la educación. A todo esto une un gran valor y el modo de saber hacerse querer; es generoso y sabe gastar a propósito; pero su ambición sobresale entre todas sus cualidades y defectos y ella es el móvil de todas sus acciones. Flores, si no me equivoco, está llamado a hacer un papel considerable en este país.<sup>11</sup>

Todo esto en cuanto a personas que se circunscribían en el círculo de categoría y prestigio. Otros individuos, de mucho menos relieve, pasaban también por el crisol de la crítica: uno de ellos fué un tal Coronel Santana, que hacía las veces de secretario de Bolívar. Comentaba el *Libertador*:

Todo es frío en Santana . . . su espíritu, su alma, su corazón; y su cuerpo participa de esa indolencia moral; sólo su memoria tiene alguna actividad y suple en él la falta de ideas y de imaginación. Su humor es melancólico . . . la sensibilidad excesiva que se ve en él, viene de la debilidad de los nervios y es por consiguiente una afección física y no una cualidad moral. Es tímido por esto, como por falta de usos y de mundo: nadie más abandonado en su persona. . . Tiene algo de cínico. . . No es militar aunque viste el uniforme . . . pero sabe guardar un secreto.<sup>12</sup>

Nuestros pueblos, señalamos, tampoco escaparon el linceo análisis de Bolívar como lo comprueba este acre y severo pasaje de los tiempos cuando Páez insistía en su principio insurreccional:

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 66-67.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid*, p. 36.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 71-72.



El origen más impuro es el de nuestro ser: todo lo que nos ha precedido está envuelto con el negro manto del crimen. Nosotros somos el compuesto abominable de estos tigres cazadores que vinieron a la América a derramarle su sangre y a encastar con las víctimas antes de sacrificarlas, para mezclar después los frutos espúreos de estos enlaces con los frutos de esos esclavos arrancados del Africa. Con tales mezclas físicas; con tales elementos morales ¿Cómo se pueden fundar leyes sobre los héroes, y principios sobre los hombres?<sup>13</sup>

Bueno es recordar, tras esto, el cuadro nada halagador que nos presenta Bolívar de la Colombia de este tiempo. Atribuía la depravación moral del país a la mala educación, a la falta de luces, y para remate, a la pasión del juego "más generalmente dominante y más fuerte" que en ninguna otra parte. Comenta el *Libertador*:

La mala educación . . . apaga todo sentimiento de honor, de delicadeza y de dignidad, facilita el contagio de las malas costumbres y de todos los vicios: la falta de luces perpetúa la inmoralidad, hace que el hombre se adelante cada día más en el camino de los vicios en lugar de salir de él para ponerse en él de la virtud y del honor; el juego aumenta las necesidades, corrompe al hombre de bien, es causa de muchos robos, de seducciones, de traiciones y de asesinatos, porque el jugador, para hacerse de dinero con que satisfacer su pasión, es capaz de todo.<sup>14</sup>

Que los dones singulares de crítico son decididamente inconfundibles y muy compatibles con su fina y exquisita sensibilidad, demuéstalo Bolívar en otros campos que el de la pintura moral. Asegura Perú de Lacroix, cuán intenso era en el *Libertador* el apego a la buena y variada lectura, hábito ya muy arraigado que se continuaba con católico fervor en Bucaramanga. Seguía a la lectura sus correspondientes y atinados comentarios. En páginas del *Diario*, que corresponden al 1828, se testifica: mayo 23 — se leyó, como si fuera escrito en español, el único e *impío* poema *La Guerra de los Dioses*. Sabemos, aunque el pasaje no lo indica, que en 1799 el francés Evaristo Parny dió a la luz esta obra que más luego adquiriera y destruyera el Gobierno de la Restauración. Elogióse a Voltaire, autor favorito de Bolívar, regustándose todo lo del cínico enciclopedista: estilo admirable, grandes y profundos pensamientos, filosofía, crítica fina y diversión; comentáronse sucintamente los escritores ingleses y muy en particular

<sup>13</sup>*Cartas*, t. VI, p. 11.

<sup>14</sup>*Diario*, pp. 96-97.

a Walter Scott; también la *Nueva Heloísa* del ginebrino Rousseau, pesadísimo engendro aunque de admirable estilo.<sup>15</sup> Por mayo 26 se tocó sobre el artículo *El Gabinete de Saint Cloud* relativo al Gran Napoleón. El comentario que en este apartado se presenta no dejará de ofrecer comidilla de ordenanza para cuantos hacían en el *Libertador*, y hoy en día le hacen, reparos cesaristas; por cuantos encontraban en él, y aún encuentran "íntimas vacilaciones", conflictos entre "las fuerzas positivas y negativas de su inestable equilibrio", ya que a Bolívar, se remacha, "le atraía y repelía a la vez la idea de coronarse Inca de una Gran Colombia que abarcara todas las tierras hispánicas en torno al Brazil."<sup>16</sup> Ya nosotros, sea dicho de paso, en estudio sobre María Antonia Bolívar, hermana mayor del *Libertador*, dejamos asentado, con anterioridad y comprobadamente, un aspecto en desacuerdo con el que acabamos de transcribir.<sup>17</sup> Empero, volviendo a lo del francés, decíale nuestro prócer a Perú:

Ud. habrá notado que en mis conversaciones, delante de los de mi casa y otras personas, nunca hago el elogio de Napoleón; que por el contrario, cuando llego a hablar de él o de sus hechos es más bien para criticarlo que para aprobarlo, y que más de una vez me ha sucedido llamarlo tirano, déspota, como también el haber censurado varias de sus grandes medidas políticas y algunas de sus operaciones militares. Todo esto ha sido y es aún necesario para mí, aunque mi opinión sea diferente; pero tengo que ocultarla y disfrazarla para evitar que se establezca la opinión de que mi política es imitada de la de Napoleón, de que mis miras y proyectos son iguales a los suyos, de que como él quiero hacerme emperador o rey, dominar la América del Sur como él dominó la Europa: todo esto no habrían dejado de decirlo si yo hubiera hecho conocer mi admiración y mi entusiasmo para con ese grande hombre. Más aún habrían hecho mis enemigos: me habrían acusado de querer crear una nobleza y un estado militar igual al de Napoleón en poder, prerrogativas y honores... esto hubiera sucedido si yo me hubiera mostrado, como lo soy, grande apreciador del héroe, si me hubiesen oído elogiar su política, hablar con entusiasmo de sus victorias, preconizarlo como el primer capitán del mundo, como hombre de Estado, como filósofo y como sabio. Todas estas son mis opiniones sobre Napoleón, pero gran cuidado

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 102-103

<sup>16</sup>Madariaga, Salvador de, *Bolívar*, t. II, México, 1951, p. 328.

<sup>17</sup>Véase, *Boletín de Historia y Antigüedades*, Academia Colombiana de Historia, No. 268, V. XXIV, Bogotá, febrero de 1937, pp. 96-103.

he tenido y tengo todavía de ocultarlas. El *Diario de Santa Helena*, las campañas de Napoleón y todo lo que es suyo, es para mi la más agradable y provechosa lectura: es donde debe estudiarse el arte de la guerra, el de la política y el de gobernar.<sup>18</sup>

El 30 de mayo se discutió la *Historia de Colombia* del Sr. José M. Restrepo, Ministro del Interior por aquel entonces, hallándose en dicha obra bastante exactitud de los relatos, y comparándose con otra *Historia de Colombia* de Lallement, donde los hechos aparecen truncados y falsificados, aunque de estilo correcto y conciso.<sup>19</sup> Por mayo 31, junio 2 y 4, vuélvese a enjuiciar la obra de Restrepo a quien se califica de rico en pormenores históricos, abundante en la colección de detalles, fiel en la cronología, erróneo en algunos conceptos, particularmente sobre operaciones militares y descripciones de batallas y combates; de estilo difuso y fastidioso aunque en partes vivo y sostenido, parcial e injusto en ocasiones.<sup>20</sup> Al señalar virtudes y defectos de acuerdo con el criterio personal, sobrepasa Bolívar lo que en la crítica literaria se denominan conceptos interpretativo, impresionista, y moral, para señalarse, sencillamente y aunque no lo pretendiera, de crítico judicial. Volviendo a los días 21 y 22 de mayo<sup>21</sup>, léese en los respectivos epígrafes:

... Libros prestados a S. E. -- Su crítica sobre el autor de la obra titulada "*Gabinete de Saint Cloud*."

... Opinión del *Libertador* sobre el poema *La Guerra de los Dioses*.

Abrese en esta parte del *Diario de Bucaramanga*, según testimonio de su autorizado editor y comentarista, Mons. Navarro, una inmensa laguna irreparable de ocho páginas; y es caso de lamentar, por supuesto, que en ella quedaran sepultados e ignorados otros quizá más ámplios juicios que emitiera Bolívar sobre dichos particulares.<sup>22</sup>

"¡Que bello sería," comentaba el *Libertador*, "que el Istmo de Panamá fuera para nosotros lo que el de Corinto para los griegos!" Surgía en su mente, ya desde temprano, la visión grandiosa de que los nuevos estados que habrían de nacer de una América Hispana independiente, formasen una confederación ejemplar. La posibilidad de que tal empresa se realizara obedecía a razones de tenerse un mismo origen, una lengua misma, unas costumbres, una religión. Empero, palmarios imposibles preconizaban también el fracaso del proyecto: situaciones

<sup>18</sup>*Diario*, pp. 116-117.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid*, p. 131.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 98, 100.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 98, 241-243.

diversas, opuestos intereses y caracteres desemejantes. Estos pareceres del Emancipador futuro explanábanse en *Contestación de un Americano Meridional a un Caballero de esta isla* o sea aquel documento que se engendraba en Jamaica por los años de 1815. Hízose una tentativa a la realización del sueño cuando en 1824 invitaba Bolívar a los Gobiernos de Colombia, México, Río de la Plata, Chile y Panamá a fin de que sus plenipotenciarios, reunidos bajo los auspicios de una victoria, formasen la confederación suspirada: "que nos servirá de consejo en los grandes conflictos, de punto de contacto en los peligros comunes, de fiel intérprete en los tratados públicos cuando ocurran dificultades, y de conciliador, en fin, de nuestras dificultades." La creación de este gigante, nos explica Bolívar, sería no muy común empresa y constituiría el último servicio que se le rindiera a la América Hispana. Encantado con la idea, aconseja el *Libertador* que se pasara por todo con tal de tener federación; siempre y cuando se conservara, a todo trance, el propósito federal, la apariencia de tal cuerpo político: su mera sombra salvaría a los pueblos del abismo. Llegó el momento, empero, de no soñarse con idealidades, de creerse poco y esperarse menos. "Los argentinos," lamentaba Bolívar, "quieren restringir las facultades del congreso, y yo creo que se deben ampliar hasta lo infinito, y darle un vigor y una autoridad verdaderamente soberana... yo desearía que esta asamblea fuese permanente para que sirviendo de árbitro en las diferencias que cada día han de suscitarse entre los estados nuevos y vecinos, fuere el lazo que los uniese perpetuamente."<sup>23</sup> Al fin y al cabo, en completa y acada pintura, hácese conciencia, y presenta Bolívar una evaluación, una crítica de este conclave de enviados diplomáticos. Escribíasele a Santander:

Yo veo el congreso del Istmo como a una representación teatral, y veo nuestras leyes como Solón, que pensaba que sólo servirían para enredar a los débiles y de ninguna traba a los fuertes. En tanto que esto pasa por mí, los diaristas proclaman a los *héroes* bajo las leyes y a los *principes* sobre los hombres. Aquí de la ideología. Esta será la patria celestial donde las leyes personificadas van a combatir por los héroes y los principios, como los genios del destino, dirigirán las cosas y gobernarán a los hombres. Vírgenes y Santos, ángeles y querubines serán los ciudadanos de este nuevo paraíso. ¡Bravo! ¡Bravísimo! Pues que marchen estas legiones de Milton a parar el trote a la insurrección de Páez, y puesto que con los principios y no con los hombres, se gobierna, para nada necesitan ni de Ud. ni de mí. A este

<sup>23</sup>*Cartas*, t. I, pp. 181-205, t. IV, p. 2, t. IV, p. 308, t. V, pp. 140, 264.

punto he querido yo llegar de esta célebre tragedia, repetida mil veces en los siglos y siempre nueva para los ciegos y estúpidos, que no sienten hasta que no están heridos ¡Qué conductores!<sup>24</sup>

Si el Congreso, desafortunadamente, no llegó a formar la liga más vasta o más extraordinaria, en la historia diplomática de estos pueblos de la América nuestra es preciso hacer conciencia de que en este comienzo arraigó la idea de conciliación, la regla del arbitraje, normas que habrían de asentarse como base del derecho público, aún cuando la historia de estas entidades políticas no confirme el consistente acatamiento a dichos principios.<sup>25</sup>

En adición a estas evidencias del espíritu crítico que informaba la personalidad del *Libertador*, en el índice a la monumental colección *Cartas*, el eminente investigador Don Vicente Lecuna ha catalogado, tanto los sendos y profundos pensamientos de Bolívar, como la amplia y variada lista de autores citados por el prócer. Y estas *Cartas*, como sus Proclamas, como sus Discursos donde se acrisolan sus dotes oratorias, conjuntan definitiva gravedad de ideas y de forma, rebozan de palpitantes emociones y vívidas imágenes. Todo lo cual induce a que se discierna en dicha prosa, un ritmo propio que proviene de la ordenación de las ideas, ideación que varía musicalmente según cambia la arquitectura de la frase al tenor de su contenido emotivo e intelectual. Dotado de aquel sagasísimo talento, de aquella curiosidad viva e inquieta por los grandes problemas cual privaba en esclarecidos moralistas, podemos contar a nuestro hombre haciendo número, sino entre los filósofos, por lo menos entre los célebres pensadores cuyos aciertos no se han perdido en el vacío sin resonancia y sin crédito. Sirvan pues estos lacónicos índices para señalar valimientos que bien pudieran ampliarse con la lectura de las indicadas fuentes.

"Y en la soberbia concepción humana y universal del *Libertador* no es de presumir que el maravilloso espectáculo de la naturaleza resbalara sin dejar huella alguna apreciable de su paso."<sup>26</sup> A este respecto, donde se revela el ingenio de Bolívar con cautivante independencia y caudal propio es en: *Mi Delirio sobre el Chimborazo*,<sup>27</sup> sobre el llamado Rey de los Andes, el de las eternas nieves que se alza orgullosa y majestuosamente en la cordillera occidental de Riobamba. Llegaba Bolívar, aguijoneado por la imaginativa, desde el caudaloso

<sup>24</sup>Véase *Proclamas y Discursos del Libertador*, Ed. de Lecuna, Caracas, 1938.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup>Véase Hernández de Mendoza, C., *El estilo de Bolívar*, Bogotá, 1846, p. 13.

<sup>27</sup>*Proclamas, Op. Cít.*, pp. 280-281.

Orinoco, envuelto en un manto de Iris, a donde "ninguna planta humana había hollado la corona diamantina que pusieron las manos de la Eternidad sobre las sienas excelsas del domador de los Andes." Un delirio febril embarga su mente y se siente poseído del Dios de Colombia. Bajo el semblante venerable de un viejo se le presenta el Tiempo, cargado con los despojos de las edades. A las sabias amonestaciones del padre de los siglos, siéntese el *Libertador* sobrecogido de terror sagrado y replícale:

. . . ¿cómo, ¡oh Tiempo! . . . no ha de desvanecerse el mísero mortal que ha subido tan alto? He pasado a todos los hombres en fortuna, porque me he elevado sobre las cabezas de todos. Yo domino la tierra con mis plantas; llego al eterno con mis manos; siento las prisiones infernales bullir sobre mis pasos; estoy mirando junto a mis rutilantes astros, los soles infinitos; miro sin asombro el espacio que encierra la materia, y en su rostro leo la Historia de lo pasado y los pensamientos del Destino.

Traslucen estas íntimas líneas un momento máximo de ébrias sensaciones de grandeza, y se llega a los umbrales del destemple imaginativo; más bien que el mortal satélite del carro de Marte parece nos hablan las apasionadas creaciones del *Werther*, parto del genio de Weimar, o del *Renato* de Chateaubriand. Nuestro héroe, a la sombra del Dios de Colombia, penetra en los umbrales de lo infinito para recibir de lo Eterno la misión de traer a los hombres excelsas revelaciones del misterio del Universo físico y el Universo moral. Este paroxismo tan arrebatador "puede considerarse como la verdadera creación artística de Bolívar. Es un brote de inspiración, la exaltación de su espíritu, una pincelada de poesía . . . un verdadero valor literario considerado en sí mismo y no a través de la personalidad de su autor . . . es uno de los mejores caminos para llegar a la intimidad del *Libertador*."<sup>28</sup> Lo cual nos lleva a confrontar lo testimoniado por Marius André de que "Bolívar tenía todas las cualidades que constituyen al gran escritor. Si su genio y las circunstancias no le hubieran convertido en genio militar, el *Libertador* y organizador de naciones habría podido en otros tiempos dedicarse a las especulaciones del intelecto, ser un filósofo, un sociólogo, un historiador, un poeta y un crítico literario."<sup>29</sup> También Olmedo, estando en la plenitud de sus facultades poéticas y creadoras, hubo de emitir su criterio al respecto. En carta publicada

<sup>28</sup>Hernández de Mendoza, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 57-67.

<sup>29</sup>Véase Covas, J. M., *El Superhombre*, 3a. ed., Caracas, 1943, p. 349.



en el *Repertorio Colombiano* decíale el guayaquileño a Bolívar en abril de 1825:

Siempre he dicho yo que V. tiene una imaginación singular; y que si se aplicara V. a hacer versos, excedería a Píndaro y a Osián.<sup>30</sup>

Preveníamos: los méritos de tamaña aseveración o conjetura, el que Bolívar habría podido sobrepujar al príncipe de los poetas líricos griegos o al hijo del escocés Fingal, no entra en nuestro caso. Conviene, sí, abrir aquí un paréntesis, traer a colación cierta aclaratoria de ordenanza. Autoridades hay, aunque no abundan, que ponen muy en duda el que Bolívar hubiese concebido *Mi Delirio*. La extraña mezcla de emociones tumultuosas que en el febril ensayo se revelan, bien pudiera haber sido parto del cerebro del *Libertador* aún cuando no haya pruebas históricas inconcusas de que él ascendiese a las cumbres solemnes del Chimborazo. A este respecto dícenos el concienzudo historiador alemán Gerhart Masur, quien muy documentadamente ha estudiado a nuestro hombre: "El estilo, el vocabulario, y las ideas no son de Bolívar pero sí de un imitador suyo. Además, el *delirio* se publicó juntamente con sus Proclamas (Caracas, 1845) después de su muerte, haciendo así mucho más dudosa su autenticidad. Recientemente, el *Boletín* de la Academia de Quito, No. 66, 1945, dió a la luz un manuscrito que pretendía ser el texto original del *delirio*. Sin embargo, según me asegura el Sr. (Vincente) Lecuna, la escritura no es del puño y letra de Bolívar ni de ninguno de sus secretarios."<sup>31</sup>

Sigamos, pues. Dada la elevación de ideas y las condiciones de estilo manifestadas por el *Libertador* en muchos o en casi la totalidad de sus escritos principales, y como hemos visto, que estaba dotado de una imaginación poderosamente exuberante y poética, aunque jamás hiciera "profesión" u "oficio" de las musas, basta para llegar a la aserción definitiva de que sí sabía, con afinidad y certeza, avaluar compenetradamente los quilates y pátina del género, conjeturando, si cabe, que desconociese las reglas de la métrica. Don José María Salazar, Ministro que fué de Colombia en París y Washington, además de haber impulsado el restablecimiento del teatro en Bogotá con sus juveniles piezas originales, compuso versos, siendo por ende autor del primer himno nacional de su patria y cantor de la victoria de Bocayá. Desde Rosario de Cúcuta decíale Bolívar a Santander refiriéndose a los versos del bardo: "... me parecen admirables, son muy lindos y tienen mucha

<sup>30</sup>Véase Cañete, Manuel, *Escritores Españoles e Hispano-Americanos*, Madrid, 1884, p. 175.

<sup>31</sup>Masur, Gerhart, *Simón Bolívar*, Albuquerque, N. M., 1948, p. 463.



propiedad."<sup>32</sup> La crítica de nuestros tiempos tal vez no haya confirmado este juicio; empero, estas poesías, como innumerables otras que surgieron durante el sangriento conflicto de independencia, tienen meritísimo valor histórico, llevan sello de sentida y sincera inspiración aunque fuesen arranques poéticos de circunstancias. También en carta al vicepresidente, esta vez del puño y letra del General Sucre, Bolívar hace referencia a ciertos "versitos" que entrarían en un artículo declamatorio contra la guerra a muerte de los españoles: "... no hay cosa tan divertida como la poesía para cantar desgracias y hacerlas amar con el encanto de las sirenas."<sup>33</sup> Lo cual, conjeturamos, alude a la musa popular que surgió como expresión fiel y natural de los choques de pasiones que dominaron los espíritus de la época. Siendo así, era a todo punto plausible e inevitable, que apareciese una "literatura" de propaganda, candente; de folletos fogosos encaminados a cimentar los ánimos y crear unidad de propósitos.

Cúmplenos una interposición. Muy generalizado es el criterio de que figuran en los fastos de las letras llamadas clásicas del mundo americano, tres o cuatro poetas: confírmalo Menéndez y Pelayo.<sup>34</sup> Compagínanse aquí, la perfecta y pura dicción humanista, apasionamiento y espontaneidad líricos aunados a la contemplación melancólica y exaltación pindárica vertido el todo en resonantes metros y esplendidas imágenes. En este enjuiciamiento entran el venezolano Bello, el cubano Heredia y el ecuatoriano Olmedo. Y acéptase de incontrovertible este dictado, de mucho tiempo a esta parte, por cuantos se significan en los cánones críticos y que evalúan frutos culminantes como, *Silva a la agricultura en la zona tórrida*, *Al Niágara* y *En el teocalli de Cholula*, y *Victoria de Junín: Canto a Bolívar*, primicias de los vates señalados. Por lo presente, nos ocuparemos exclusivamente del guayaquileño.

Por razones del combate de caballerías sostenido en Junín, encuentro ominoso acaecido el 6 de agosto de 1824, y con cuyo triunfo habría de prepararse el de Ayacucho en diciembre 9 del mismo año, conságrase Olmedo a inmortalizar en singular poema los hechos de estas dos contiendas. Y si prescindimos de las sutilezas académicas y retóricas sobre si el conjunto entra en el género de la epopeya, de la oda o del canto épico, lo que importa advertir es que el poema de Olmedo

<sup>32</sup>*Cartas*, t. II, p. 161.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid*, p. 264.

<sup>34</sup>Véase Menéndez y Pelayo, M., *Antología de Poetas Hispano-Americanos*, t. III, Madrid, 1928, pp. CIX-CXI.

"corresponde a la grandeza de los acontecimientos y está compuesto de manera de corresponder al lirismo epopéyico de la época."<sup>35</sup>

La recomendación de Bolívar a Olmedo, según se colige de la carta de éste a *Libertador* el 31 de enero de 1825,<sup>36</sup> de que su musa patriótica celebrara los dos afortunados eventos, no dejó de crear tamaño y serio dilema para el poeta quien hubo de contestar:

Siento que V. me recomienda cantar nuestros últimos triunfos. Mucho tiempo ha, mucho tiempo ha que revuelvo en la mente este pensamiento. -- Vino Junín, y empecé mi canto. Digo mal; empecé a formar planes y jardines; pero nada adelanté en un mes... vino Ayacucho, y desperté lanzando un trueno. Pero yo mismo me aturdí con él, y he avanzado poco.

El punto estético de la unidad, sin embargo, hubo de resolverse mediante la aprición del Inca Huaina-Capac cuyo vaticinio enlazaría a Junín y Ayacucho: asunto controvertible desde entonces:

Aseguro a V., continúa Olmedo, que todo lo que voy produciendo me parece malo y profundísimamente inferior al objeto. Borro, rompo, enmiendo, y siempre malo. He llegado a persuadirme de que no puede mi musa medir sus fuerzas con ese gigante. Esta persuasión me desalienta y resfía.<sup>37</sup>

¿Modestia? De todos modos, muy a pesar de esta nota de desánime, y por encima del pedimento de Bolívar de excusar su nombre en el poema, éste hubo de concluirse, de primera intención, siendo recibido por el *Libertador* camino del Cuzco. De nada le valió dictar leyes a las Musas. El prócer quedó pagado y penetrado de una gratitud sin límites por tan feliz envío; y en la respuesta de agradecimiento hácese algunas observaciones generales de este tenor:

Ud. me hace dueño de todos los personajes... Todos tenemos nuestra sombra divina o heroica que nos cubre con alas de protección como ángeles guardianes. Ud. nos hace a su modo poético y fantástico; y para continuar en el país de la poesía la ficción de la fábula, Ud. nos eleva con su deidad mentirosa... Ud., pues, nos ha sublimado tanto, que nos ha precipitado al abismo de la nada, cubriéndonos con una inmensidad de luces el pálido resplandor de nuestras opacas virtudes.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup>Barrios, I. J., *Literatura Ecuatoriana: Apuntaciones históricas*, Quito, 1939, p. 114.

<sup>36</sup>Cañete, *Op. Cit.*, I. 181.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 294-295.

<sup>38</sup>*Cartas*, t. II, pp. 6, 7.

En menos de un mes pudo el *Libertador* hacer detenido y minucioso estudio del poema: hiciéronse reparos necesarios y convenientes. Todo lo cual atestigua, no sólo la ilustración y buen gusto clásico de Bolívar, sino también su talento y sensibilidad de crítico literario. Y es tan traído como llevado el hecho de que esta carta-crítica es "maravilla de sentido común, de modestia y sadiduría." Modestia, repetimos, porque, como diría el Maestro Palma, la primera condición del que se mete a crítico debe ser la buena fe, ya que faltando ésta, todo el que enjuicia se convierte en necio de caparazón y gualdrapa. La carta que consideramos, preciosa joya, y que según entendemos fué propiedad del archivo de D. Martín de Icaza, publicóse por vez primera en *Los Andes*, luego reimpresa en el *Repertorio Colombiano*. En nuestros tiempos, el documento se estropea y se mutila con mal gusto, a fin de utilizar sus partes en manuales de literatura o en superficiales y ligeras antologías, especialmente aquellas que sirven de libros de texto. Hállase por entero sólo en las colecciones que manejan los peritos, en obras de concienzudos investigadores; y hemos examinado, en fecha reciente, una excelente traducción al inglés.<sup>39</sup> A nuestro parecer, la epístola merece ser mucho más conocida y apreciada. Insertámosla textualmente porque con ello se completará el cuadro que hemos pretendido trazar. Hela aquí:

Cuzco, 12 de julio de 1825

Señor don José Joaquín Olmedo.

Mi querido amigo:

Anteayer recibí una carta de Ud. de 15 de mayo, que no puedo menos de llamar extraordinaria, porque Ud. se toma la libertad de hacerme poeta sin yo saberlo, ni haber pedido mi consentimiento. Como todo poeta *es temoso*, Ud. se ha empeñado en suponerme sus gustos y talentos. Ya que Ud. ha hecho su gasto y tomado su pena, haré como aquel paisano a quien hicieron rey en una comedia y decía: "Ya que soy rey, haré justicia." No se queje Ud., pues, de mis fallos, pues como no conozco el oficio daré palos de ciego por imitar al rey de la comedia que no dejaba títere con gorra que no mandase preso. Entremos en materia.

He oído decir que un tal Horacio escribió a los pisones una carta muy severa, en la que castigaba con dureza las composiciones métricas; y su imitador, M. Boileau, me ha enseñado unos cuantos preceptos para que un hombre sin

<sup>39</sup>Véase Bierck, Jr., Harold A., *Selected Writings of Bolívar*, T. II, Nueva York, 1951, pp. 519-522.

medida pueda dividir y tronchar a cualquiera que hable muy mesuradamente en tono melodioso y rítmico.

Empezaré usando de una falta oratoria pues no me gusta entrar alabando para salir mordiendo; dejaré mis panegíricos para el fin de la obra, que, en mi opinión, los merece bien, y prepárese Ud. para oír inmensas verdades, o, por mejor decir, verdades prosáicas, pues Ud. sabe muy bien que un poeta mide la verdad de un modo diferente de nosotros los hombres de prosa. Seguiré a mis maestros.

Ud. debió haber borrado muchos versos que yo encuentro prosáicos y vulgares: o yo no tengo oído musical, o son... o son renglones oratorios. Páseme Ud. el atrevimiento; pero Ud. me ha dado este poema y yo puedo hacer de el cera y pabalo.

Después de esto, Ud. debió haber dejado este canto reposar como el vino en formación para encontrarlo frío, gustarlo y apreciarlo. La precipitación es un gran delito en un poeta. Racine gastaba dos años en hacer menos versos que Ud., y por eso es el más puro versificador de los tiempos modernos. El plan del poema, aunque en realidad es bueno, tiene un defecto capital en su diseño.

Ud. ha trazado un cuadro muy pequeño para colocar dentro un coloso que ocupa todo el ámbito y cubre con su sombra a los demás personajes. El Inca Huaina-Capac parece que es el asunto del poema: él es el genio, él la sabiduría, él es el héroe, en fin. Por otra parte, no parece propio que alabe indirectamente a la religión que le destruyó; y menos parece propio aunque no quiera el restablecimiento de su trono por dar preferencia a extranjeros intrusos, que aunque vengadores de su sangre, siempre son descendientes de los que aniquilaron su imperio: este desprendimiento no se lo pasa a Ud. nadie. La naturaleza debe preceder a todas las reglas, y esto no está en la naturaleza. También me permitirá Ud. que le observe que este genio Inca, que debía ser más leve que el éter, pues que viene del cielo, se muestra un poco hablador y embrollón, lo que no le han perdonado los poetas al buen Enrique en su arenga a la reina Isabel, y ya Ud. sabe que Voltaire tenía sus títulos a la indulgencia, y, sin embargo, no escapó la crítica.

La introducción del canto es rimbombante: es el rayo de Júpiter que parte a la tierra a atronar a los Andes que deben sufrir la sin igual fazaña de Junín. Aquí de un precepto de Boileau que alaba la modestia con que empieza Homero sus divinas *Iliada*; promete poco y da mucho. Los valles y la sierra proclaman a la tierra: el sonsonete no es lindo; y los

soldados proclaman al general, pues que los valles y la tierra son los humildes servidores de la tierra.

La estrofa 360 tiene visos de prosa: yo no sé si me equivoco; y si tengo culpa, ¿para qué me ha hecho Ud. rey?

Citemos, para que no haya disputa, por ejemplo el verso 720:

Que al Magdalena y al Rimac bullicioso. . .

Y este otro, 750:

Del tiempo que prepara glorioso. . .

Y otros que no cito por no parecer riguroso e ingrato con quien me canta.

La torre de San Pablo será el Pindo de Ud. y el caudaloso Támesis se convertirá en Helicon; allí encontrará Ud. su canto lleno de esplín y consultando la sombra de Milton hará una bella aplicación de sus diablos a nosotros. Con la sombra de otros muchos ínclitos poetas, Ud. se hallará mejor inspirado que por el Inca, que, a la verdad, no sabría cantar más que yaravies. Pope, el poeta del culto de Ud., le dará algunas lecciones para que corrija ciertas caídas de que no pudo escaparse ni el mismo Homero. Ud. me perdonará que me meta tras de Horacio para dar mis oráculos: este crítico se indignaba de que durmiese el autor de la *Iliada*, y Ud. sabe muy bien que Virgilio estaba arrepentido de haber hecho una hija tan divina como la *Eneida* después de nueve a diez años de estarla engendrando; así, amigo mío, lima y más lima para pulir las obras de los hombres. Ya veo tierra; termino mi crítica, o mejor diré, mis palos de ciego.

Confieso a Ud. humildemente que la versificación de su poema me parece sublime: un genio lo arrebató a Ud. a los cielos. Ud. conserva en la mayor parte del canto un calor vivificante y continuo; algunas de las inspiraciones son originales; los pensamientos nobles y hermosos; el rayo que el héroe de Ud. presta a Sucre es superior a la cesión de armas que hizo Aquiles a Patroclo. La estrofa 130 es bellísima: oigo todos los torbellinos y veo arder los ejes: aquello es griego, es homérico. En la presentación de Bolívar en Junín se ve, aunque de perfil, el momento antes de acometerse Turo y Eneas. La parte que Ud. da a Sucre es guerrera y grande. Y cuando habla de La Mar, me acuerdo de Homero cantando a su amigo Mentor: aunque los caracteres son diferentes, el caso es semejante; y, por otra parte ¿no será La Mar un Mentor guerrero?

Permítame Ud. querido amigo, la pregunta ¿de dónde sacó Ud. tanto estro para mantener un canto tan bien soste-

nido desde su principio hasta el fin? El término de la batalla da la victoria, y Ud. la ha ganado porque ha finalizado su poema con dulces versos, altas ideas y pensamientos filosóficos. Su vuelta de Ud. al campo es pindárico, y a mi me ha gustado tanto que le llamaría divino.

Siga Ud., mi querido poeta, la hermosa carrera que le han abierto las musas con la traducción de Pope y el canto a Bolívar.

Perdón, perdón, amigo; la culpa es de Ud. que me metió a poeta.

Su amigo de corazón,

Bolívar<sup>40</sup>

Esta cita, aunque prolija, ha sido necesaria porque compendia el sentido crítico-literario del *Libertador*; por ella nos damos cuenta cabal de que, en el momento de expresar su criterio, se apoya generalmente en los cánones o reglas aceptadas en su tiempo como las mejores e infalibles. Hay aquí sendas evidencias de sólidos estudios y de pureza ética, de facultad ingénita para comprender y juzgar; y a estas prendas se suma la exquisitez y el buen gusto, ajenos a todas las reglas y preceptivas.

Los discretos y bien intencionados reparos de Bolívar a esta primera versión del poema, calificalos Olmedo de "poco más, poco menos" de justificados. Se arguye, por ende, que dicha copia había aparecido plagada de errores; que se limpiarían las evidentes máculas y que se harían, al mismo tiempo, variaciones y adiciones considerables; que se tuviera en cuenta, sobre todo, que su canto fué más bien parto del corazón que de la imaginativa. Tras estas aclaraciones el poeta agrega:

Todos los capítulos de Ud. merecerían una seria contestación; pero no puede ser ahora. Sin embargo, ya que Ud. me da tanto con Horacio y con su Boileau, que quieren y mandan que los principios de los poemas sean modestos, le responderé que eso de reglas y de pautas es para los que escriben didácticamente, o para la exposición del argumento de un poema épico. ¿Pero quién es el osado que pretenda encadenar al genio y dirigir los raptos de un poema lírico? Toda la naturaleza es suya: ¿Qué hablo yo de la naturaleza? Toda la esfera del bello ideal es suya. El bello desorden es el alma de la oda, como dice su mismo Boileau de Ud. Si el poeta se remonta, dejarlo; no se exige de él sino que no caiga. Si se sostiene llena su papel y los críticos más severos se quedan atónitos con tanta boca abierta, que se les cae la pluma de

<sup>40</sup>*Cartas*, t. V., pp. 36-40.



la mano. Por otra parte, confieso que si cae de su altura, es más ignominiosa la caída así como es vergonzosísima la derrota de un baladrón. El exabrupto de las obras de Píndaro, al empezar, es lo más admirable de su canto. La imitación de estos exabruptos es lo que muchas veces pindarizaba a Horacio.<sup>41</sup>

Críticos dignos de crédito y respeto — Caro, Cañete, Menéndez y Pelayo y otros que excusamos señalar — han discutido ya de manera categórica y definitiva, con todos sus pormenores, el genio lírico de Olmedo en el poema de Junín; han elaborado, también por extenso, sobre el plan y la composición del canto, cuya pauta, por decirlo de una vez hubo de indicar Bolívar. Hagamos memoria de que el ilustre maestro de las *Ideas Estéticas en España* dignóse elogiar “la admirable sagacidad” y “el buen sentido” de nuestro prócer. En cuanto a nosotros, sólo nos interesa comentar algún tanto respecto a las fuentes, los cánones de estética literaria sobre los cuales descansan los criterios que se consignan en la celebre epístola, y no si hay razón de perdad en los discernimientos.

Bolívar aduce en su abono al preceptista francés Boileau y al latino Horacio. Aventuramos a creer, pero prestos a las rectificaciones, que éste y los demás clásicos latinos con quienes el *Libertador* estaba amplísimamente familiarizado se conocían en traducciones.<sup>42</sup> Don Guillermo Pelgrón, uno de los tutores de Bolívar, hubo de malograr en sus intentos al proponerse hacer de su pupilo consumado latinista. De todos modos, el conocimiento de literaturas clásicas es incontrovertible. Todo lo cual nos induce a reflexionar una vez más en aquella axiomática observación referente a la similitud de la literatura con el proceso biológico: que prevalecen las ascendencias y descendencias. En atención a que en las letras parece imperar la trascendencia y universalidad de la imitación, dícenos Asín Palacios en su Introducción a *Disertaciones y Opúsculos* del docto arabista Julián Ribera y Tarragó: “... el fenómeno de imitación observado en muchos órdenes de hechos humanos individuales y sociales es tan transcendental que permite considerarlo como principio universal que rige la vida entera de la cultura y de su trasmisión y progreso.”<sup>43</sup> Aducimos este dictamen ya que vamos a tratar sobre la indicada carta-crítica de Bolívar; porque dicha epístola, así como su voluminosa correspondencia entran de lleno en el casillero académico de composiciones literarias. La más ligera

<sup>41</sup>En Cañete. *Op. Cit.*, p. 312.

<sup>42</sup>Véase Lecuna, V., *Papeles de Bolívar*, T. II, Madrid, 1920, pp. 44-45.

<sup>43</sup>Rivera y Tarragó, J., *Disertaciones y Opúsculos*, t. II, Madrid, 1928, p. LXVL.



ojeada en algún que otro manual de retórica y poética lo comprobaría fácilmente puesto que reúnen aquellos requisitos del "género": estilo sencillo y natural, que no excluye los pensamientos ingenuos; tono y lenguaje familiares, pero correcto y esmerado.<sup>44</sup>

De todos los poetas romanos, ninguno, dicese, tan leído como Horacio; de sus poesías, ninguna mereció ser más estudiada que su *Arte Poética*, tratado que constituye para muchos, el código de la razón aplicada a todas las artes en general. Repitamos, de paso, que en la semi-satírica *Epístola a los Pisones* no se propuso otra cosa que un desenfado humorístico y nunca legislar metódica y dogmáticamente. Ciertamente que para sus fines el romano seleccionaba juiciosamente del crítico alejandrino Neoptolemus de Parium, pero además se afinaba en Aristóteles. Y en la concatenación imitativa que arranca de los tiempos del Estagirita, entran, al igual que el de Venouse, el cremonés Girolano Vida y el frío aunque correcto e ingenioso Boileau Despreaux con su *Arte Poética*: insólito legislador de las letras francesas que fijara una especie de racionalismo poético oficial cual lo haría Descartes en lo filosófico y el Obispo de Meaux en lo eclesiástico en los áureos días de Luis XIV. Y han de avenirse y conjuntares por esta corriente preceptista, en grado mayor o menor, los numerosos traductores y comentaristas de las poéticas clásicas en España durante los Siglos XVI y XVII amén los preceptistas más originales de la categoría del Pinciano y del Brocense hasta llegado el predominio de lo académico y pseudo-clásico francés acaudillado por el zaragozano Luzán y su *Poética* de 1737.<sup>45</sup> Todo lo cual se reduce a substanciar una verdad tan traída como llevada: que en la literatura no hay estricta autoctonía, obra del todo indígena, y que todo libro nace de otro libro y toda idea de otra idea, aunque sin detrimento, como diría la Pardo Bazán, de la verdadera originalidad que consiste en el carácter individual de las obras.

No queremos inferir de que Bolívar se las diese de preceptista literario y que a tenor de ello hiciese tasa artística del canto de Olmedo, su contemporáneo. ¿No dicen los germanos que la cercanía a los árboles no permite ver la selva? Lo que nos basta afirmar es que el *Libertador* sí estaba sobradamente compenetrado de los clásicos cánones, y que a lo humanista, si se quiere, se permitiese con este conocimiento la autoridad y el prestigio para hacer las veces de comentador y escolista. En el estudio de las retóricas de los antiguos y modernos hubo de adquirir aquella pericia que le adornara en este respecto; y sin que

<sup>44</sup>Véase Marroquín, M., *Retórica y Poética*, Bogotá, 1935, pp. 101-102.

<sup>45</sup>Véase Menéndez y Pelayo, M., *Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España*, t. IX, Madrid, 1919, pp. 33 y sgts.

fuese necesario, cual lo hacían los maestros de antaño, el darse a la ordenación de asuntos, a definir, a clasificar y formular preceptos.

La tarea de corroborar algunos apartados de la carta de Bolívar a la luz de los principios estéticos y puramente convencionales del clasicismo no es de suyo ni árdua ni ajena a nuestros designios. Comencemos, pues, por partes. En primer término, Bolívar hace referencia a la epístola de Horacio a los Pisones "en la cual castigaba con dureza las composiciones métricas." A nuestro entender, este *Libro de Arte Poética* como le llamaría Quintiliano, ya que su autor, por modestia, por haber sido un carácter muy independiente y sin ambición, jamás intentó adjudicarle tal distingio, iba dirigida a Lucio Piso y al hijo mayor de éste. Ni uno ni otro necesitaban de este aleccionamiento horaciano sobre la creación artística: la poesía, el drama, y la expresión estilística. Discurría Horacio, sí, mas no en tonos severos, ni fustigadores, ni decididamente inflexibles. Aconsejaba y guiaba a otros como a sí mismo, por las que a su juicio constituían rectas veredas estética: cánones que servirían de formidable ariete contra el formalismo vacuo y ramplón, contra las sutilezas y argucias poéticas. Decía con aquella admirable humildad que siempre ha caracterizado a los grandes y verdaderos ingenios;

Yo sin escribir nada enseñaré el cargo y el oficio de  
donde se saque el caudal poético, que crie al poeta y le haga  
acabado.

Al lector deleitando y juntamente enseñando.<sup>46</sup>

Y el que Bolívar se tomase las atribuciones de dividir y tronchar, careciendo, como advierte, de entendimiento y versatilidad métricos, encuentra su apoyo en la venia que le confirió el poeta y que tenía su aprobante en la recomendación:

Busca amigos que sepan ser censores de todo error  
intrépidos contrarios.<sup>47</sup>

Continuando el análisis de la carta-crítica, señalamos también la advertencia de que se escriba reposadamente, de que se borre mucho y se lime otro tanto. Tras las enmiendas que se consigan, continúa Bolívar: "Ud. ha debido haber dejado este canto reposar como el vino en fermentación para encontrarlo frío, gustarlo y apreciarlo." Sobre estos puntos machacaban repetidamente tanto el romano como el francés:

<sup>46</sup>Véase Cejador y Frauca, J., *Horacio en Lengua Castellana*, Madrid, 1929, pp. 305-306. Para los comprobantes utilizamos, además, las poéticas de Horacio y Boileau, ed. de A. S. Cook, Nueva York, 1926. Se indicará: Cej., H.; C., H.; C., B.

<sup>47</sup>Cej., H., p. 131; C., H., pp. 32-33; C., B., p. 169.

Cuando algo leías a Quintiliano, enmienda esto y lo otro te decía. Que te aferrabas en que sin salirte mejor lo habrías intentado en balde dos y tres veces: te mendaba borrarlo y volver a la fragua los mal torneados versos... Pero si algo en otro tiempo hubieres escrito... quédese encerrado todo un año bien encajonados los papeles; podrás borrar lo que no hubieres publicado... púlase, lima y más lima...<sup>48</sup>

En cuanto a que la naturaleza precidiese a todas las reglas, Horacio y Boileau hacían de ello otro de sus fuertes. Empero, la recomendación de Bolívar podría haber provenido directamente del *Essay on Criticism* de Alejandro Pope con quien el *Libertador* estaba harto familiarizado; y no se nos pase por alto que el inglés igualmente componía sus preceptos a la sombra de los antiguos.<sup>49</sup>

El caso del Inca Huaina-Capac a quien Bolívar encontraba un tanto hablador y embrollón, nos hace recordar a Cervantes. En el capítulo 48 de la I.a parte del *Quijote*, el ilustre Manco de Lepanto, al considerar las comedias "que ahora se presentan" como "ejemplos de disparates, necedades y lascivias", se pregunta: ¿"Qué mayor disparate que pintarnos un viejo valiente o un mozo cobrade, un lacayo retórico, un rey ganapán y una princesa fregona?" En otras palabras, los personajes deben de hablar con la naturalidad propia de su carácter y estado, o como recomendaban los preceptistas de nuestro asunto, "dar a cada personaje lo que conviene."<sup>50</sup> Bolívar también frunce el ceño ante la rimbombancia del canto que debiera haber empezado con modestia. Aquí se sigue a Boileau que abogaba por llanos principios, porque se excusara toda altisonancia y estruendo, y señalaba a Homero como modelo a seguir en estos casos.<sup>51</sup> Y en cuanto a que Horacio se indignase porque durmiese el autor de la *Iliada*, el *Libertador* sin duda hacía memoria cuando el latino dijo: "Me da rabia de que alguna vez dé sus cabezadas el gran Homero."<sup>52</sup>

Otros escolios del prócer despiertan en nosotros no menos interés. Vengamos primero a lo del gran Racine quien paciente y dilatadamente moldeaba sus versos. Este trágico francés, a instancias de sus mayores, vino a pasar gran parte de sus años juveniles en Uzés en el sur de Francia. ¡Y todo ello porque no se continuara el amistoso consorcio que se tenía con ciertas actrices conocidas por intermedio de La

<sup>48</sup>Cej., H., pp. 110-111, 306, 309-311; C., H., pp. 28-29; C., B., pp. 168-169.

<sup>49</sup>Véase Pope, Alexander, *Essay on Criticism* en *Complete Poetical Works*, Cambridge Press, 1903, p. 69; Cej., H., p. 306; C., H., p. 24; C., B., p. 205.

<sup>50</sup>Cej., H., p. 306; C., B., p. 12.

<sup>51</sup>Pope, Alexander, *Op. Cit.*, p. 69.

<sup>52</sup>Cej., H., P. 308.

Fontaine y Le Vasseur! En dicho pueblo del Mediodía, y mientras se aguardaba un beneficio eclesiástico, pudo Racine entregarse por completo al estudio y trabajo resposados al calor de las inspiradoras luces de Píndaro, Homero y la Santa Biblia. Y ahora, la arenga de Enrique Bolívar, no hay que discutirlo, va derecho contra la débil concepción épica, *La Henriada* en 10 cantos de su favorite Voltaire. El segundo y parte del tercero, consúmelos el Rey Enrique III en una al parecer inacabable relación a la reina Isabel, haciendo revista de las causas de las guerras en Francia con acompañamiento de pesadísimos detalles y pormenores relativos a las matanzas de hugonotes.<sup>53</sup> Menciónase a Virgilio como arrepentido de haber prohiado su divina *Eneida*. De las autoridades antiguas, el latino Suetonio en su *Vita Virgilio* es quien con más certeza nos suministra informes respecto a que la *Eneida* se trabajó en prosa primeramente; luego se escribieron los libros que la integran sin orden preferente. Y según el testimonio de estas autoridades de antaño y las investigaciones de los modernos, el protegido de Augusto y de Mecenas consagró en su obra máxime más de una década, viviendo siempre arrepentido de no haber logrado el ideal fugitivo. Tenemos por último la recomendación a Olmedo de que se consultase al inglés Pope para corregir aquellas caídas de que no pudo escapar el mismo Homero. Decíalo el *Libertador* por saber que dicho ensayista estaba a la mano del poeta, que éste se ocupaba en la traducción de las tres primeras epístolas del *Ensayo sobre el hombre*. Pues este Pope, tan admirado de Olmedo, también había compuesto en sus años juveniles un manual de generalizaciones sobre poética: *Essay on Criticism*, especie de guía satírica contra los falsos métodos de la crítica.<sup>54</sup>

Recordamos haber afirmado que todas estas advertencias de Bolívar iban dirigidas a la primera versión de la *Victoria de Junín*, notablemente defectuosa. Para el 19 de abril de 1826 toda había sido subsanado. Desde Londres dícele Olmedo al *Libertador*:

El canto se está imprimiendo con gran lujo y se publicará la semana que entra; lleva el retrato del héroe al frente y una lámina que representa la aparición y oráculo del Inca en las nubes. Todas estas exterioridades necesita el canto para aparecer con decencia entre gentes extrañas.<sup>55</sup>

Esta edición, seguida de la de París, se realizó después del retoque, tras la mucha lima que se le dió al poema durante la travesía del poeta

<sup>53</sup>Véase Voltaire, *La Henriada en Obras Completas*, París, 1877.

<sup>54</sup>Véase Pope, Alexander, *Op. Cit.*, pp. XV, 7-77.

<sup>55</sup>En Cañete, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 311-312.

a Europa; pero a pesar de todo, nunca se hizo trastorno general del canto. Uno de estos preciosos ejemplares del *Canto de Junín* fué presentado al *Libertador* por su editor, el Sr. R. Ackerman, el mismo inglés cuyas obras de instrucción pública fueron favorablemente acogidas y solicitadas con empeño en los pueblos americanos.<sup>56</sup>

Aquí, pues, es preciso detener estas apuntaciones que otros de más enjundia bien pudieran ampliar autorizadamente. Con sobradísima razón se afirma que la crítica de autores antiguos ofrece la dificultad del estudio de antecedentes históricos, literarios y críticos; la de los autores contemporáneos ofrece el mayor inconveniente de no haber sido sometidos a prueba y análisis y por lo tanto pueden confundir por falta de perspectiva. En el caso del *Libertador* y Olmedo, todo lo contrario. Reiteramos la premisa que dejamos asentada en el principio: en cuanto a dar voto aprobatorio o negativo de las acciones de álguien a base de conceptos morales; en el delinear situaciones; respecto a formular juicios sobre obras literarias, fundándose en principios estéticos y del buen gusto, Bolívar estaba dotado de acendrada pericia interpretativa que singulariza la pátina de las cualidades revelantes de su polifacetismo.

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<sup>56</sup>*Cartas*, t. 7, p. 102



## LA REVISTA AZUL Y EL MODERNISMO MEXICANO

Harley D. Oberhelman

La *Revista azul*, una de las revistas literarias más destacadas de México del siglo diecinueve, llegó a ser portavoz del movimiento modernista de la América española septentrional. Este movimiento literario tenía como motivo primordial la renovación de la prosa y la poesía hispánicas que, según los iniciadores del movimiento, habían caído en los excesos de la retórica romántica. En otros términos, los modernistas intentaron introducir una belleza más fina y sutil en las letras españolas. Su impulso inicial se tradujo en un ansia de novedad y de superación en cuanto a la forma de sus composiciones. Con el propósito de incorporar más elementos musicales a su verso, imitaron la versificación francesa e inventaron combinaciones nuevas basadas en las formas españolas tradicionales. Más tarde, resucitaron los moldes antiguos del verso español como el monorrima de Berceo y el pie quebrado y emplearon las técnicas de los gongoristas. Los modernistas se sirvieron a menudo de colores vagos y nebulosos y de símbolos de elegancia plástica en sus descripciones impresionistas, y alcanzaron ambientes exóticos al usar el Oriente, la Grecia antigua, y la Francia de los Borbones como fondo de sus creaciones artísticas.

Dentro del movimiento es posible distinguir dos etapas bien definidas: la primera etapa, caracterizada por el preciocismo francés y las torres de marfil, cedió puesto a un modernismo maduro y más personal después del año 1898. Con la derrota de España en ese año los países hispano-americanos, ansiosos frente al "Coloso del Norte," buscaron inspiración en fuentes castellanas y empezaron a preocuparse con los problemas hemisféricos. El arte literario de la *Revista azul* se acerca más bien a la primera etapa del modernismo, pero a la vez hay indicaciones precisas de la madurez inminente del movimiento.



Fundada en mayo de 1894 por el famoso literato Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera y el periodista Carlos Díaz Dufóo, la *Revista azul* se parecía mucho a las revistas simbolistas de Francia de aquel entonces. Salía cada domingo como suplemento del periódico, *El partido liberal*, cuyo redactor, Apolinar Castillo, sirvió de patrocinador y financiero de la nueva publicación. Tuvo una vida bastante corta de unos tres años, pero su importancia para la literatura moderna y contemporánea de México es de una índole significativa. En la opinión de Arturo Torres-Rioseco la *Revista azul* tuvo para el modernismo tanta importancia como el libro de Rubén Darío del mismo nombre, porque, amplia y tolerante como el espíritu de Gutiérrez Nájera, alentaba todo impulso de novedad literaria por insignificante que fuese.<sup>1</sup> El año de su fundación se considera de significación especial en la historia de la literatura Mexicana a causa del cambio fundamental que efectuó en la organización de los literatos del país. Antes, los literatos se habían agrupado en academias, liceos, o sociedades literarias; ahora era una revista que se constituía en exponente de una escuela literaria, el modernismo. La *Revista azul* descubrió nuevos talentos literarios que se desarrollaron y maduraron en el cenáculo de la *Revista moderna*.<sup>2</sup>

Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, fundador de la revista y mentor de los jóvenes modernistas de la capital mexicana, profesó la actividad literaria y periodística con asidua constancia durante casi veinte años antes de su muerte temprana en 1895, a la edad de treinta y cinco años. Su nombre va unido a los periódicos y revistas principales de la Ciudad de México de aquel entonces. La poesía najeriana, tan apreciada y bien labrada, influyó mucho el movimiento modernista, pero la importancia de su prosa, nostálgica y melancólica, fué más significativa. Su estilo elegante de un romanticismo tardío y refrenado lo emuló la generación de jóvenes modernistas que le veneraba y colaboraba en su *Revista azul*. Constituían esta generación Carlos Díaz Dufóo, Luis G. Urbina, Amado Nervo, Jesús Urueta, José Juan Tablada, Jesús Valenzuela, y Ángel de

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<sup>1</sup>*Precursores del modernismo* (Madrid, 1925), pág. 53.

<sup>2</sup>La *Revista moderna* (primera época, 1898-1903; segunda época, 1903-1911) siguió las mismas tendencias modernistas bajo la dirección de Amado Nervo y Jesús E. Valenzuela. Las dos revistas abarcan todo el período de renovación literaria en México. En 1906 apareció otra revista de tendencia renovadora, *Savia moderna*, que publicó solamente cinco ejemplares. Se pareció a la *Revista Moderna*, y fué órgano de un grupo de literatos jóvenes que habían organizado el Ateneo de México, una sociedad literaria cuya lema fué "Arte libre."

Campo.<sup>3</sup> Era una generación individualista, sin nexos estrechos, unida sólo en el amor mutuo por el verso azul y la palabra bien formulada.

La *Revista azul* publicó las contribuciones de la generación modernista, y a la vez introdujo una cantidad de escritores extranjeros, principalmente franceses y españoles, al público mexicano. Las obras de los parnasianos y simbolistas franceses y las de literatos españoles como Salvador Rueda, Ramón de Campoamor, Núñez de Arce, Manuel Reina, y Federico Balart encontraron buena acogida entre las páginas de la revista e influyeron a su vez la producción literaria de la nueva generación.<sup>4</sup> La *Revista azul*, además de ser una de las revistas modernistas sobresalientes, era representativa de la literatura hispánica y europea del fin del siglo diecinueve. Genaro Estrada describió la variedad de escritores incluidos en los cinco tomos de la revista con las palabras siguientes: "... aunque no fué un periódico de rigurosa selección de los escritos, sí lo fué de escritores selectos."<sup>5</sup>

Un análisis detallado del contenido de la *Revista azul* indica que fué una revista de más énfasis literario que las otras revistas modernistas como la *Revista moderna* que incluyó artículos semicientíficos y comentarios sobre la vida política. Aunque había varias poesías en cada ejemplar, la importancia de la prosa fué más grande y las innovaciones técnicas utilizadas por los escritores de esta generación se destacaron más en la prosa que en el verso. Los géneros de prosa de más significancia para la *Revista azul* fueron: la crónica, el cuento, la crítica literaria, el esbozo, las notas de viaje, y las citas epigramáticas. El género más empleado fué la crónica, un comentario sobre acontecimientos del día cultivado como una forma especial de prosa artística.<sup>6</sup> Varias crónicas se ocuparon

<sup>3</sup>Aunque la obra de Díaz Dufóo y la de Ángel de Campo se apartan del modernista puro, los dos se asociaron estrechamente con los modernistas mexicanos durante el período de 1894 a 1896.

<sup>4</sup>Sobre la influencia europea, y especialmente la francesa, en la *Revista azul* y la *Revista moderna* pueden consultarse estos tres estudios de Dorothy Kress: "El peso de la influencia francesa en la renovación de la prosa hispanoamericana," *Hispania*, XX (1937), pp. 125-132; "Síntesis del modernismo," *Atenea*, XII, Núm. 154 (1938), pp. 84-91; y "The Weight of French Parnassian Influence on the Modernist Poetry of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera," *Revue de littérature comparée*, III (1937), pp. 555-571.

<sup>5</sup>*Poetas nuevos de México* (México, 1916), pág. ix.

<sup>6</sup>Para un estudio de este género y una bibliografía extensa de las crónicas de Gutiérrez Nájera publicadas en los periódicos de la capital mexicana, véanse los artículos siguientes de E. K. Mapes: "Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera: Obras inéditas recogidas de periódicos de México," *Revista hispánica moderna*, III (julio 1937), pp. 292-293; y "Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera: Seudónimos y bibliografía periodística," *Revista hispánica moderna*, XIX (enero-diciembre 1953), pp. 161-204.

en relatar las ocasiones especiales de la vida de la alta sociedad o en describir fiestas nacionales, mientras otras fueron más filosóficas. Gutiérrez Nájera, Luis G. Urbina y Carlos Díaz Dufóo escribieron la mayoría de las crónicas.

Otro género emparentado muy estrechamente con la crónica fué el esbozo, empleado principalmente por Ángel de Campo. La diferencia principal que se nota entre los dos géneros es la falta de tema central en el esbozo. Usualmente el autor intenta la descripción de una escena observada desde diferentes puntos de vista y a varias horas del día. Junto con el trazado de lo visual el escritor busca a la vez la descripción de los sonidos y los olores que se asocian con la escena particular. El cuento es otro género de prosa que se ve con menos frecuencia en las páginas de la *Revista azul*. Gutiérrez Nájera y Díaz Dufóo contribuyeron la mayoría de los cuentos, pero los de éste no son de una índole modernista sino realista y a veces didáctica. Los cuentos de Gutiérrez Nájera, en cambio, son casi siempre sentimentales y gastan muchos párrafos en presentar el aspecto emocional de los protagonistas sin describir su fisonomía.

Uno de los aspectos más importantes de la revista es la gran cantidad de crítica literaria. La mayoría de esta crítica la escribieron los modernistas mexicanos que sirvieron en el cuerpo de redactores y refleja, por lo tanto, el gusto literario de esa generación de autores. Hay varios tratados sobre las obras de Julián del Casal, José Echegaray, Gutiérrez Nájera, Leconte de Lisle, Benito Pérez Galdós, William Shakespeare, Justo Sierra, Luis G. Urbina y unos cuarenta escritores más.

En cuanto a la poesía hay que mencionar la falta de innovación métrica que se suele asociar con el modernismo. Las primeras innovaciones significantes en la versificación modernista se observan principalmente en la obra de Rubén Darío titulada *Prosas profanas* del año 1896, fecha de la cesación de publicación de la revista. Por lo tanto, se ven en la *Revista azul* las formas tradicionales de la versificación española, pero hay, sin embargo, una preferencia especial por el soneto. Aunque no hay innovaciones en la versificación, sí las hay en los temas y hasta cierto punto en el estilo de varios versos. Estas innovaciones siguen frecuentemente el ejemplo nostálgico de Gutiérrez Nájera e imitan su destreza especial para la combinación de la música y la poesía. Hay gran interés también en la cultura francesa y, por lo tanto, se pueden hallar poesías en imitación directa de Théophile Gautier y de Leconte de Lisle. A menudo surgen los temas de decadencia que abundan en el verso de Charles Baudelaire y en él de los primeros simbolistas. También hay unos poemas que tratan de temas indígenas y de problemas hemisféricos,

característica que se identifica usualmente con el modernismo maduro representado por la obra de José Santos Chocano y por los *Cantos de vida y esperanza* (1905) de Rubén Darío.

Por toda la revista se dilata una nostalgia romántica en mucho de la prosa y poesía, sin duda el efecto persistente de la obra de Gutiérrez Nájera. Otra característica de origen romántico que se nota principalmente en las crónicas y en los esbozos es el interés en el ambiente inmediato. Pero la influencia romántica es subordinada a la parnasiana francesa. De los parnasianos los modernistas de esta generación aprendieron el valor de los adjetivos precisos y de la estructura bien ordenada en una composición literaria. Llegaron a estimar la calidad y la selección cautelosa de sus palabras descriptivas más bien que la cantidad de su adjetivación. Lo impersonal parnasiano, sin embargo, surge infrecuentemente y sólo en casos aislados.

Otras tendencias que constan en el periódico se relacionan con esfuerzos de crear la música y el ritmo por medio del uso hábil de ciertas palabras. También se ve el esfuerzo de sugerir una emoción sin expresarla en términos concretos. A veces la omisión de verbos u otras palabras produce el efecto de inconstancia que puede compararse con la pintura impresionista. Los simbolistas franceses contemporáneos utilizaban muchos de los mismos recursos en su prosa y poesía.

Aunque es posible observar las características susodichas en casi todas las composiciones modernistas de la revista, es preciso reiterar que cada escritor de esta generación conserva su individualidad literaria particular. Estos autores se apropiaron frecuentemente de la literatura europea contemporánea, y dieron nueva forma a lo apropiado, infundiéndolo con una vitalidad duradera. Durante una existencia relativamente breve la *Revista azul* dejó una marca indeleble en la literatura mexicana e hispanoamericana, y la capital mexicana durante este período gradualmente llegó a ser el centro del movimiento modernista de toda la América española. La *Revista azul* fué importante no sólo para la generación modernista, pero también ha seguido influyendo la producción literaria mexicana de las generaciones subsiguientes. Sólo hoy día los críticos literarios están empezando a darse cuenta de la importancia relativa de Gutiérrez Nájera y de su generación al desarrollo de la literatura mexicana y es de esperar que este interés creciente aumente durante los años que vienen.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Pueden consultarse ejemplares de la *Revista azul* en las bibliotecas de estas instituciones de los Estados Unidos: Library of Congress (Núm. AP63.495), Duke University, University of California (Los Angeles), University of Iowa, University of Kansas, University of Nebraska, University of Southern California (microfilm), University of Texas y Tulane University.



# BOLIVIA'S SOCIAL REVOLUTION, 1952-1959: A DISCUSSION OF SOURCES

Charles W. Arnade

Recent events have once again focussed attention upon the Republic of Bolivia and the efforts of its governing party, the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario, to grapple with the realities of a chaotic economy and a changing social and political order.

Yet, studies of the development of the Bolivian social revolution have not kept pace with Bolivia's increased prominence in news reports, perhaps because of the inavailability and widely-scattered nature of source materials. Bolivian source materials cannot be considered in a vacuum, however, and a brief survey of recent Bolivian history is in order here.

The MNR came to power in Bolivia by revolution on April 9, 1952. Dr. Víctor Paz Estenssoro, leader of the MNR, returned from exile abroad to assume the presidency which he had been denied after winning a plurality in the elections of 1951. Paz served out his term and was replaced as president in accordance with the results of the 1956 elections by Dr. Hernan Siles Zuazo, who had led the MNR to victory within Bolivia while Paz was exiled. As of this writing, it appears probable that Siles will complete his term of office. Inasmuch as between 1925 and 1952 no Bolivian president ever completed his term of office, the present record marks a degree of political stability rarely achieved in Bolivian history.

The revolution is, however, more than mere military victories or even orderly transfers of executive power. The whole economic and social order of Bolivia has been changed. The tin magnates, who had created a

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*Editor's Note:* Asterisks used in this article refer to a book report by the same author in the present issue.

state within a state, *un superestado*, manipulating Bolivian presidents and legislators at will, lost their lucrative mines and power. The Army, which had largely functioned as an instrument of suppression and political manipulation, and as protector of the established social order, was abolished. The Indians, who comprised an overwhelming majority of the population of Bolivia, gained for the first time full civil and political rights. The MNR instituted a radical program of land reform through which the Indian won property rights. The educational system was re-organized along more democratic lines. Of course, the above reforms created many problems such as galloping inflation, food shortages, and relative poverty for fixed-income groups and remnants of the old aristocracy. The prosperous mining industry practically collapsed, labor unions abused their new power, and many Indians confused liberty with license. In short, Bolivia has been undergoing a real revolution since 1952.

This revolution, whose scope and depth parallel the Mexican revolution and is second only to it as the greatest social change in Latin America during this century, attracted little unfavorable comment in the United States. The most likely reason is that Communist subversion or participation, so noted in Guatemala, was completely absent in Bolivia, although the defeated opposition tried hard to create the opposite impression. The Bolivian revolution therefore did not antagonize the United States. Furthermore, the interests that suffered from the effects of the Bolivian revolution were practically all non-American. This was a distinct difference from the Mexican Revolution which went directly against American interests and in which American citizens lost their lives. The Bolivian revolution did nothing to antagonize the sensitivity of the United States, a fact that revolutionary leaders were quick to exploit. Appealing to the innate liberal feeling of many American leaders, they received substantial aid to solidify the revolution and to attempt to stem inflation. Thus, in Bolivia a social revolution was instituted attracting less attention than the Mexican Revolution of decades ago, the more recent one in Guatemala, or that of Cuba today.

As for source materials themselves, the literature in English is quite sparse. Bolivian revolutionary writings, too, lack the depth and appeal of the works of, for example, Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre or Rómulo Betancourt. Bolivia's revolution was practical and realistic, rather than given to the production of profound philosophical works. Its defense is best studied in editorials of the official newspapers, and a summary is readily available in Saturnino Rodrigo's *Diario de la revolución nacional*, La Paz, 1955. During the revolutionary period, of course, many Bolivian writers were drawn into the controversy, and their works are available giving



positions pro and con. The opposition's most lucid book is \*Albert Ostria Gutiérrez, *A People Crucified: The Tragedy of Bolivia*, New York, 1958, which is a revised translation of the Spanish edition, *Pueblo en la cruz*, Santiago de Chile, 1953, by Bolivia's most brilliant Foreign Minister. Another excellent conservative analysis is that by Jorge Siles Salinas, illegitimate brother of President Siles Zuazo, whose *La aventura y el orden* was published in Santiago de Chile in 1956.

A brief word must be said concerning what is known as the Eder Report, today's most controversial document in Bolivia. To the writer's knowledge, there is no single volume or paper containing the report written by George Eder, U. S. stabilization adviser. Parts of the report were published in dispersed fashion in Bolivian newspapers. As of this writing, Mr. Eder's suggestions have never been collected in one printed item. The writer was told that copies of Eder's suggestions, or report, still marked confidential, may be found in Bolivia with some difficulty. Most leftist organizations, violently opposed to Mr. Eder, have made copies of the report from originals in Bolivian Government and U. S. offices. It would seem fitting at this time for the Bolivian Government or U. S. agencies in Bolivia to publish Mr. Eder's work, thereby trimming controversial speculation which only serves to nourish unfavorable conjecture.

Two other reports, not easily available but crucial to a study of modern Bolivia, must be mentioned. The Ford, Bacon and Davis Company's (New York City) three-volume survey of Bolivian mining was completed and written in 1956 and is the most detailed analysis of the national mining industry and its problems. Not available in libraries, this work can be consulted at the office of Ford, Bacon and Davis or at the Bolivian desk of the State Department and the International Cooperation Administration. Of broader nature is the report presented to Bolivia by U. S. economic experts during World War Two, under the direction of Mr. Merwin L. Bohan. This study, prepared in 1942, is usually known in Bolivia as the Bohan Report. It is not printed, but Mr. Bohan told the writer that six copies are available, and that one may be found in the Library of Congress. The State Department and the Department of Commerce also have copies. The report constitutes the basis for the present Bolivian economy in that it suggests economic diversification and the linking of mountain and plains regions by a superhighway. Partial fulfillment was achieved with the inauguration of the Cochabamba-Santa Cruz highway in 1954. The Bohan Report must be taken into account by any study of modern Bolivia.

Equally valuable, but more difficult to obtain, is the newly-released "Report on Technical and Economic Aid to Bolivia" drafted by the

Bolivian Government with the approval, aid, and cooperation of the U. S. Embassy in La Paz. At first glance it appears to be a detailed and vital report. Other valuable sources, conservative in their interpretation, are *Hanson's Latin American Letter* and the *American Metal Market*, weekly reports published in New York.

In the accompanying bibliography, the writer has cited only those works not readily obtainable. For this reason, articles listed in the different readers' guides have been omitted. Such magazines as the *Saturday Evening Post*, *U. S. News and World Report*, *The Reporter*, and others contain one or two articles concerning Bolivia. These magazines are easily available in any library. Extremely good sources, but ones that may only be consulted in Bolivia, and there only with difficulty, are the different Bolivian newspapers, defunct or extant. *La Razón*, *Los Tiempos*, *La Calle*, *La Nación*, *El Pueblo*, \**Rebelión*, *Presencia*, \**Lucha Obrera*, \**Masas*, \**Linterna Minera*, \**Intransigencia*, *El País*, *El Obrero*, \**Rumbo Sindical*, \**El Ferroviario*, \**Eco Bancario*, *Unidad*, and *Orientación* are all vital if one can locate copies.

Professional journals are invaluable too, but again it is a most difficult task to obtain them, especially back numbers. *Minería Boliviana* (four years in print, published by the Cámara Nacional de Minería), *Estadística* (14 years, Banco Central de Bolivia), *Industria* (27 years, Cámara Nacional de Industria), *Memoria Anual* (? years, Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales Bolivianos), *Boletín Estadístico* (81 numbers, Ministerio de Hacienda y Estadística), *Gaceta Campesina* (7 years, Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos), *Revista de la Caja Nacional de Seguridad Social* (2 years) all are useful for economic research. Such journals as *Khana* (1953—), *Cordillera* (1954—), *Revista Signo* (1956—), *Kollasuyo* (1939—), all in La Paz; *Revista Jurídica* (1936—), *Revista de Cultura* (1954—), *Revista de Agricultura* (1943—), in Cochabamba; *Revista Jurídica* (1950—), *Problemas Nacionales* (1957—), *Surco* (1952—), *Universidad* (1942—), in Potosí; *Universidad San Francisco Xavier* (about 1930—), *Revista del Instituto de Sociología Boliviana* (1951—), *Revista de Estudios Jurídicos, Políticos y Sociales* (1939—), in Sucre; *Universidad* (1951—), *Revista de Ciencias Jurídicas, Políticas y Sociales* (1957—), *Revista Económica* (1952—), *Bibliografía Jurídica Boliviana* (1954—), in Oruro; *Revista Jurídica* (1952—), *Revista Universitaria* (1929—), *Gaceta Rural* (1956—), *Abriendo Surcos* (1957—), in Santa Cruz; *Revista de la Universidad Misael Saracho* (1940—), *Revista de la Facultad de Derecho* (1940—) in Tarija; and *Revista Oriente* in Riberalta contain much useful information.

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## EDUCATION IN CHILE, 1810-1842

Margaret V. Campbell

Any history of education in republican Chile, however brief, must of necessity touch first upon the colonial period. Although education, and indeed government, were completely dominated by the Church during the colonial period, in the late eighteenth century Chile grew restless under religious domination and began to free both its educational system and its governmental process from absolute church control.

Prior to the eighteenth century education had been the exclusive prerogative of the church. In the period immediately preceding the Independence the Church and the clergy began to lose some of their unchallenged importance and authority. This loss was reflected in administration and schools. The expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767 and the not-too-respectful criticism of things religious by Charles III indicated that the Church was no longer directing the government and hence was no longer the dominant element in the educational process.

As the realization grew that education need not be exclusively ecclesiastical, interest began to mount in the establishment of a university in Chile. Accordingly, in 1758, after a series of petitions, the University of San Felipe began to function with a staff of ten professors. A school of medicine was later opened in 1769.

With the opening of the University of San Felipe the Church's monopoly of knowledge ceased to exist and advanced education came within reach of the layman. One could become educated without becoming a churchman. Convent schools had previously offered only an elementary education, and then only to the wealthy classes. The governing class, however, continued to regard the education of the poor and women as dangerous practice.

The new university exerted considerable influence upon elementary training. Graduates of the university formed an intellectual nucleus that

avored a reform in the extension of elementary education. This group was in favor of the decree issued by Charles III in 1773 providing for the maintenance of schools for children by *cabildos* and *municipios*. Pupils attending these parochial schools — a scant dozen in Santiago — paid fees to priests conducting the schools and naturally only those students who could pay were admitted. Yet by the close of the eighteenth century there were four secondary schools in Chile, one of which was the Academia de San Luis, a special secular school founded in 1797 whose curriculum included such things as practical mining.

#### THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (1810-1823)

The War of Independence began with the formation of the first national Junta in 1810 and ended with the founding of the republic in 1823. The struggle for independence moved through three phases: the Patria Vieja, a period of preparation and propaganda; the Reconquista, defeat; and the Patria Nueva, reconstruction.

During the four-year period of the Patria Vieja (1810-1814), the revolutionists, anticlerical in attitude, had two objectives — independence and destruction of the clerical régime.

The patriots realized that another way to attain their double goal was to improve educational opportunities. With this in mind they began by establishing in 1810 the Instituto Nacional. It was formed by the fusion of the University of San Felipe and three *colegios* — the Convictorio Carolino, the Seminario Conciliar, and the Academia de San Luis. The Instituto Nacional offered instruction in the humanities and the professions as well as ecclesiastical training, since the Seminario Conciliar was incorporated as a part of the new school. The Instituto Nacional opened in 1813 and of the fourteen professorships, five were devoted to religion and church matters. There was one each for the following: international law and political economy, experimental physics, chemistry, geography and military science, pure mathematics, drawing, logic, and metaphysics and philosophy. There were two professors of Latin. Eight of the teachers were clergymen.

The Junta also sanctioned a new plan for primary education providing for schools for boys and girls<sup>1</sup> in every community having more than fifty families. Teaching was to be gratuitous, and the profession of *maestro de escuela* was to be created. To complete the project the Junta

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<sup>1</sup>Quite early in the nineteenth century a priest, José Ignacio Zambrano, attempted to establish a school for girls. He was criticized so severely that he was obliged to close it.

founded a public library, using as a basis the books that the Jesuits had stored in the University of San Felipe.

A program as far reaching as the above required at most a tranquil atmosphere in which to develop. The peace so necessary to further such plans was shattered by the royalist invasion. For the time being the reforms could not be carried forward. Yet the efforts were not entirely lost, for three years of propaganda, reform, and struggle had won over almost all of the cultured people of the old colony to the idea of independence.

With the taking of Rancagua, the Spanish reconquest was complete. During the Reconquista (1814-1817), all the institutions that the patriots had abolished were re-established. Hence it may be assumed that education was largely under clerical control.

With the victories of Chacabuco and Maipú came the *patria nueva* (1817-1823) and a provisional military administration under Bernardo O'Higgins. The foreign influence of the period was primarily British.

In the field of national organization, O'Higgins founded the Academia Militar in 1817. In 1818 Lord Thomas Alexander Cochrane was engaged to build up a Chilean navy. In the same year, parallel to the Academia Militar, the Academia de Guardias Marinas was established. The new navy cleared the seas of Spanish dominion and aided in the independence of Peru (1820). It was during O'Higgins' administration that the Constitution of 1822 was promulgated.

O'Higgins sought to better the educational system and facilities of Chile. For advanced education it was merely a question of re-opening the Instituto Nacional. Elementary education was completely reorganized and direct relations established with England.

In 1821, when the Liceo de la Serena was founded, three Lancaster schools were also established by James Thompson, agent of the British and Foreign School Society. Two were in Santiago and one in Valparaíso. Functioning in spite of clerical opposition, these public schools were successful but of short duration (1821-1822). When Mr. Thompson left for Peru in 1822 the clergy had the schools abolished.

To further education in general the Biblioteca Nacional was organized in 1820 under the direction of Manuel Salas. Books were scarce and not highly esteemed. The general attitude of Chileans during this period toward books may be seen in the comments of two foreigners residing in Chile at the time. An Englishman, John Miers, noticed particularly the indifference of the Chileans towards books:

. . . they (the Chileans) pride themselves in not requiring the knowledge of books: they have indeed scarcely any, nor can they endure the trouble of reading those they have. I



remember that the president of the senate, a man looked up to by his countrymen as a sort of oracular authority, boasted he had not looked into a book for thirty years, and another principal officer of the government who prides himself on being a learned man, made a similar boast insinuating thereby that to him book knowledge was unnecessary. Books, therefore, are very scarce and unsought for among them.<sup>2</sup>

J. F. Coffin, a North American, commented on the lack of books:

Durante más de seis meses he buscado inútilmente un diccionario y una gramática españoles, sin lograr siquiera averiguar donde podré encontrar alguno de estos libros. Creo que puedo atrever a decir que no hay un solo individual oriundo de la provincia (Concepción) en cuya biblioteca figuren más de media docena de obras elementales o de devoción, junto con una o dos homilias y otras tantas de medicina o cirugía. El libre comercio con el extranjero es uno de los objetos capitales que persiguen los patriotas, y si la revolución triunfa, ¡qué campo tan vasto de adelantos se abre a la nación!<sup>3</sup>

While O'Higgins went forward with civic improvements, including a decree permitting the importation of books, society itself did not progress noticeably. O'Higgins was convinced that a cultural and material program was necessary to the founding of an independent republic. To achieve that goal he considered dictatorship to be indispensable. Others naturally did not share his opinion, and in 1823 the country rose in revolt.

#### THE REPUBLIC (1823-1830)

In 1823 when O'Higgins realized that the nation was in full revolt against his régime, he resigned. The revolutionists then elected their leader, Ramón Freire, as *Director Supremo*. A serious problem confronting the new dictator was the depleted treasury and to relieve financial pressures the monasterial property was expropriated. This in turn weakened the Church control over education.

While Freire was involved in economic and ecclesiastical problems, Mariano Egaña, Secretary of State, was endeavoring to raise the cultural level of Chile. Egaña founded in 1823, in conjunction with the Instituto Nacional, the Academia Chilena which was divided into three sections: *Ciencias Morales y Políticas*; *Ciencias Físicas y Matemáticas*; and *Litera-*

<sup>2</sup>John Miers, *Travels in Chile and La Plata* (London: Printed for Baldwir, Car-dock and Joy, 1826), Vol. I, pp. 255-256.

<sup>3</sup>J. F. Coffin, *Diario de un joven norte-americano detenido en Chile* (Traducido del inglés por J. T. M.; Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Elseviriana, 1898), p. 124. The English version is unavailable.



*tura y Artes*. Although the plans were well conceived and the members were outstanding men of the time, the Academia Chilena was a failure, largely because the majority of the members devoted themselves entirely to the professions or politics and had little time to cultivate letters or science.

The following year Egaña became minister to England with instructions that, in addition to his regular duties, he was to secure professors for the Instituto Nacional. At that time many Spaniards had taken refuge in England, and it was hoped that Egaña could employ Spanish citizens for the Chilean school. His task was difficult because a professorship with a small salary in a distant land was not a tempting offer. Consequently, it was necessary for Egaña to seek professors among those who needed immediate employment.

While Egaña was engaged in securing professors in England, the Instituto Nacional was receiving intellectual stimulus from a Frenchman, Carlos Ambrosio (Charles Ambroise?) Lozier, who deserves particular mention here. Lozier was born on January 8, 1784, in Saint-Philibert des Champs, France. He studied mathematics, and in 1805 was a member of the commission preparing a census map of France. Three years later he served as a storekeeper with the French army of occupation in Spain. With the downfall of Napoleon he went to the United States and joined the expedition that José Miguel Carrera was preparing. When the expedition disbanded in Buenos Aires, Lozier attempted to found an industrial school. He failed and went to Brazil to establish a similar school. No more seems to be known of Lozier until 1817 when he was teaching mathematics in a school in Mendoza.

In 1822, Lozier was again in Buenos Aires and unemployed. He then offered his services to Chile through the Chilean minister to the Argentine, Miguel Zañartu. O'Higgins at once authorized Zañartu to employ Lozier as a professor, a position which, however, he did not immediately fill. Lozier arrived in Chile in October, 1822, with plans to establish an industrial school. These plans did not mature, and in 1823 the government commissioned Lozier to make a topographical map of Chile. After the failure of this project the government decided to employ Lozier in the capacity that O'Higgins had originally planned, and he was appointed professor at the Instituto Nacional in 1825.

Lozier was associated with the school only a short time, from 1825 to 1826. In the brief space of eight months while he was an instructor, Lozier brought about many changes and made an effort to stimulate an interest in education. He began by reforming the method of teaching arithmetic, using the system of the French teacher, Silvestre Lacroix. Shortly afterwards he began a course in French and established the

teaching of Spanish grammar. Then Lozier formed a society among his students with the twofold purpose of broadening their knowledge and extending new methods of teaching. At the first meeting the society decided to edit a monthly periodical presenting the work achieved by its members.

The new publication, the *Redactor de la Educación* (1825-1826), contained principally the reports of the meetings, pedagogical articles translated from the French,<sup>4</sup> and a scientific report worthy of mention. In the latter report there were many scientific errors, but the study is interesting inasmuch as it is the first of its kind to be published in Chile. The journal, *Redactor de la Educación*, published by the Imprenta Nacional, first appeared on October 7, 1825, and ceased publication on May 1, 1826.

- During this period the Chilean press was at a low ebb. The political uncertainty of the period could not help influencing journalism, which led a precarious existence and had no national significance. During the first year of Freire's dictatorship alone, 1823, there were twenty-three newspapers of exclusively official character or devoted to recording parliamentary action.<sup>5</sup> The pedagogical journal, the *Redactor de la Educación*, differed from the rather mediocre publications of the period in only two respects; it was not political and it was Chile's first pedagogical magazine.

Because of his many educational activities, Lozier was made rector of the Instituto Nacional in October, 1825. As a professor he had sought to better teaching methods. As rector he proposed a new program of literary studies which was begun in April, 1826. In addition, Lozier endeavored to put the study of the physical and natural sciences on a more modern basis. This plan was not realized due to the lack of books, instruments, and equipment.

Lozier considered textbooks a means of hastening the change from old methods to new. He used as many new texts as were available and

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<sup>4</sup>Juan Manuel Cobo translated Viullier's *Arithmétique*, a system of teaching arithmetic by dialogues between a mother and son. Ventura Marín translated Jean Claude de Lametherie's *La théorie de la formation de la terre*, and dialogues suggesting the best system of private instruction. Ventura Marín and Juan Miguel Caras together translated several articles from a Parisian educational magazine. Caras also translated an article on physical education by a Dr. Bailly. None of the translations was completed because the society disbanded and the paper suspended publication after the sixth issue.

<sup>5</sup>Publications from 1813 through 1827 and the number of issues of each are listed by Pelayo de Tapia in his *Bosquejo histórico de la prensa chilena*, (Valparaíso: Imprenta Victoria, 1924).

practical and introduced in the Spanish grammar course a text by the Cuban Valdés (unidentified); in the French course, one by a Frenchman Letellier (unidentified); in mathematics, texts by Lacroix, and by Francoeur (unidentified); and, in literary studies, an abridgement of the lessons of Hugo Blair, written by the Spaniard Luis Munarriz y Salas.

The most drastic reform was in the secularization of the staff to such an extent that there was only one ecclesiastic connected with the school, José María de la Torre, vice-rector and professor of theology.

As to Lozier's theories of education, he was absorbed by one idea, the value of a liberal education. Then as now, there were many teachers and citizens who did not comprehend the value of a broad education and who favored an early and intense specialization. Naturally, with this difference of opinion, difficulties arose and Lozier was destined to see all his projects end in failure. Thwarted, deprived of public support, and ill, Lozier resigned late in 1826.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of the failure of his immediate objectives, it cannot be denied that Lozier promoted education in Chile. His contribution consisted principally in revealing to the citizens of Chile the ignorance and backwardness of their public instruction. The jolt that his reforms gave the Instituto Nacional and the new methods that he tried to introduce made clear to the Chileans the defects that existed and indicated a course more in harmony with the educational aims that were to be sought later.

In 1826 the federalists rose to power and in 1829 the liberals. As federalism dissolved, two new political parties developed — the conservative *pelucones* and the liberal *pipiolos*.<sup>7</sup> The latter included the federalists, thus creating the semifederalist liberalism of 1828. A new constitution was drafted in 1828. Civil war broke out with each side claiming as its cause the defense of a violated constitution.

<sup>6</sup>Lozier was appointed State engineer and went south where he hoped to regain his health. Disillusioned and embittered by his experiences with lettered people, he decided to live among the Indians, and took an Araucanian girl as a common-law wife. He spent the remainder of his life with the tribe and died in Araucanian territory in 1864.

<sup>7</sup>The *pelucones* derived their name from the powdered wigs that the aristocrats wore on solemn occasions during the colonial period. The party consisted of the clergy, the rich, and the aristocrats.

The nickname *pipiolo* originated among men of some importance who frequented a café on the Calle Ahumada. There they played *malilla*. These men used to call the bystanders who asked for money from the winning gamblers *pipiolos* because of the cry chickens make (*pío-pío*) when seeking grain. The dictionary gives the term as "novice" or "beginner." Perhaps the public had this in mind when they called the founders of the new party *pipiolos*. See Manuel Antonio Román, *Diccionario de chilenismos y de otras locuciones viciosas*. 4 vols. Santiago: Imp. San José, 1908-1911.

During this turbulent period Chilean life felt the impact of a versatile personality, "as good a man of letters as he was a bad politician"<sup>8</sup> — José Joaquín de Mora, writer, teacher, and lawyer. Mora was born in Cádiz, January 10, 1783, and was educated at the University of Granada. In 1823, because of his political beliefs, he was forced to seek refuge in England. An advocate of colonial independence he was invited in 1827 by Bernardino Rivadavia, president of the Argentine, to edit the government paper, the *Crónica*. Shortly afterwards the liberal party of Rivadavia was defeated and Mora was asked to give his services to the Chilean government.

Chilean schools during this period were in an unusual political predicament: the government was liberal while the committee on public instruction was composed of conservatives. The committee had not functioned regularly, principally because Juan Egaña, father of Mariano Egaña and one of the important members, was in poor health. But the committee became active when its members saw liberalism gaining a footing in education through the establishment on May 1, 1828, of the first Chilean *colegio* for girls. The school was founded by Mora's wife, Francisca Delauneux.<sup>9</sup>

To balance this movement on the part of the liberals, a school for girls was established under the patronage of the conservatives — the Colegio Versin, named after the man whom the *pelucones* had summoned from Buenos Aires to take charge.

At this point Mora set about to organize a boy's *liceo* to parallel the school founded by his wife and to offset the conservative influence of the Instituto Nacional now under the direction of Juan Francisco Meneses. The government not only authorized Mora to found a school, but gave financial support in the form of ten scholarships. The scholarships were increased on October 17, 1828, when the government awarded the Mora institution, not yet functioning, the twenty scholarships that had been created the year before for equal distribution in the provinces. On November 11, President Pinto asked congress to finance forty-two additional scholarships for the Liceo de Chile, the name by which the Mora school was now called.

As the number of scholarships for the Liceo de Chile increased, so

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<sup>8</sup>Augustín Edwards, *The Dawn (being the History of the Birth and Consolidation of the Republic of Chile)* (London: Ernest Bann, Ltd., 1931), p. 260.

<sup>9</sup>The following courses were taught: reading, writing, Spanish grammar, composition, geography, history, literature, and French — the language forbidden young ladies. Music was taught by Federico Wulffing, a distinguished artist from Europe. The school was well attended by students from leading families in Santiago.

did the protests of conservatives. They claimed that the government was trying to destroy the Instituto Nacional. Meneses and his friends became indignant over the fact that, when apparently there were not sufficient funds to meet the necessities of the Instituto Nacional, the government was able to grant financial aid to the Liceo de Chile. The committee on public instruction reproached the government for granting state funds to a private institution to the detriment of the Instituto Nacional, where rich and poor alike received an education.

While Mora was proceeding with the organization of his school, the situation was further complicated by the fact that Pedro Chapuis,<sup>10</sup> accompanied by a staff of French teachers (among them Claudio Gay),<sup>11</sup> had come to Chile to open a *liceo*.

Mora wanted no rivals, conservative or otherwise, and was determined to prevent the establishment of the Chapuis school. The conservatives were resolved to strengthen their own position by employing the French staff or by lending support to the establishment of the new school. Since the government refused to grant the Instituto Nacional funds necessary for an increased staff, the conservatives threw their support to the founding of a new school.

The outcome was not a complete victory for either party. Due to the fact that Mora had the benefit of the prestige and the protection of the government to which he had rendered great services, the Chapuis *liceo* was not founded. Mora was even successful in persuading a few of the French professors to join his faculty. But Meneses was taken from the Instituto Nacional and placed at the head of the French staff, thereby creating the Colegio de Santiago — the conservative victory in the struggle. Chapuis, deserted by his staff and the conservatives, thereupon joined the liberals and became active in that party.

It was January 16, 1829, before Mora's Liceo de Chile began to function and to afford the founder an opportunity to put into practice his theories of education. Following Lozier he advocated a broad education. He admitted that society demanded of its members various kinds of service, but he believed that no matter how different the professions might be, basic preparation should be similar.

<sup>10</sup>This was not Chapuis' first trip to Chile. He had been in Santiago in 1826 editing the *Verdadero Liberal* for the conservatives, but had left because of political difficulties.

<sup>11</sup>This French scholar of natural sciences and botany was born in Draguignan, Var, and was educated in Paris. He assisted the Italian botanist Juan Bautista Balbis in gathering material for *flora lyonnaise* which was published in 1827 and 1828. As a collector for the Museum of Natural History, Gay had travelled through Greece and Asia Minor.

There were two divisions in the curriculum of the Liceo de Chile, science and literature, each of which was a five year course. One new course comprised the reading of Latin, Spanish, and French classics and the historical, literary, and philosophical evaluation of each. Mora placed emphasis upon the study of Latin, alleging that the study of Spanish grammar was so complicated that it should be reserved for maturity.<sup>12</sup>

Other innovations were the teaching of political economy, the introduction of pure mathematics, and in scientific studies, under the direction of Andrés Antonio de Gorbea, particular attention was given to chemistry. This was regarded as necessary to a country rich in minerals and important in agriculture.

In addition to the general courses, there was a military division, a division of law, and one of commerce—all of which were established by the government which continued to support Mora.

Mora was a capable man who contributed much to the development of education in Chile. His controversial personality, however, was to keep him from completing his plans.

#### THE AUTOCRATIC REPUBLIC (1831-1841)

The battle of Lircay on April 17, 1830, not only ended the civil war, but also terminated any attempt to form a liberal system of government in Chile. In the elections that followed, Diego Portales, the grey eminence of Chile, was elected vice president, a position which he was to use to become dictator and champion of order.

Later, Chile declared war on Peru, and Portales, who because of his unlimited power was considered a tyrant, was assassinated in 1837. At once in the eyes of the nation Portales became a martyr and a wave of enthusiasm rallied the Chilean troops who defeated the Peruvians at the battle of Yungay in 1839.

Yet, because of the peace and public order made possible by Portales, the nation began to thrive. Material prosperity in turn made possible social, civil and educational improvements.

Improvements in the field of education during this period centered around the activities of two foreigners in Chile, Andrés Bello, who reached Chile in 1829, and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, who arrived in 1841.

Bello was without doubt the greatest scholar in Latin America of his

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<sup>12</sup>Yet his concern for Spanish, which evidently was poorly spoken and written in Chile at the time, was shown in an article of his concerning correct pronunciation which appeared in the *Mercurio Chileno* of February 1, 1829. He noted that *ll* should be used instead of *y*, *escribir* instead of *escrebir*, etc.



day and contributed richly to the intellectual life of Chile.<sup>13</sup> He was born in Caracas in 1780 and was graduated from the University there, where his excellent classical training early inclined him toward research. Later Bello was sent to London on a diplomatic mission, which marked the beginning of his career in journalism and research. After refusing an appointment as consul-general in Paris, he accepted a position with the Chilean government and in 1829 left Europe for Santiago.

As soon as Bello reached Chile, he reported to the Department of the Treasury where he had been appointed *oficial mayor auxiliar*.<sup>14</sup> His first public activity, however, was not in connection with his official employment, but in the field of education. When Portales became dictator, Meneses, rector of the Colegio de Santiago, was summoned to fill the position of Minister of State. Bello was then appointed to Meneses' former position in the Colegio de Santiago.

In 1830 Bello introduced two new courses that brought much public attention, a course in the theory of legislation, and a course in Spanish grammar. The first course grew out of the fact that the government was faced with serious international questions and Bello realized the need for information concerning the practices adopted by nations in mutual relationship.

As for the second new subject, Spanish grammar was not studied in the colegios in 1829. When Bello arrived in Chile he found that even so-called educated people wrote and spoke incorrect Spanish. Pronunciation and spelling were bad, and conjugations and constructions worse. People did not think it necessary to study Spanish if they learned Latin grammar. To combat this, Bello instituted the above course in Spanish grammar, using as a text Hermosilla's *Arte de hablar* (1826). Bello used the Hermosilla text either because he lacked a textbook, or to refute that which was erroneous and exaggerated in the book.<sup>15</sup>

When Mora, jealous of any rival, saw the impetus given the curriculum of the Colegio de Santiago by the addition of these two new courses, he countered by offering a course in oratory at the Liceo de Chile. In the inaugural address that Mora read upon the opening of the new class, he struck directly at Bello and his staff (mostly French, it is to be remembered), by lamenting the corruption of the national language. Bello, who

<sup>13</sup>For a more detailed account of Bello's life, see Margaret V. Campbell, *The Development of the National Theatre in Chile to 1842*, (Latin American Monographs), Number 4, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1958 pp. 33-38.

<sup>14</sup>In politics he became one of Portales' most useful collaborators, being one of two close associates whom Portales never ridiculed.

<sup>15</sup>Later, in the *Araucano* of November and December, 1842, he contradicted in a very definite manner the theories of Hermosilla.



was usually courteous, answered with virulence in a series of articles beginning May 13, 1830, in the newspaper, *El Popular*. He went so far as to deny the talent of Mora, who aptly reminded him that it was he, Bello, who had favorably criticized the Mora translation of Sir Walter Scott's *Talisman* and *Ivanhoe* published in England.

The attitude of the two men toward Spanish grammar showed clearly the basic difference between the two teachers. Mora, with a superficial knowledge of many subjects, was content with offering a varied instruction. Bello, the research scholar, wanted his students to exhaust the material on each subject. Bello realized that a course in Spanish grammar was necessary if in due time there were to be poets and prose writers in Chile. According to Ricardo Latcham,

Si en Chile hubiese prevalecido Mora, que fué desplazado por el triunfo conservador en la batalla de Lircay, que ascendió a Bello, es seguro que el rumbo de los estudios no habría roto con la tradición castellana.<sup>16</sup>

The quarrel over Spanish grammar was not the only animosity that Mora brought down upon his head. Since 1829 he had opposed the conservatives through his paper the *Trompeta*. Now the attacks upon Mora became more bitter. Because of government economy moves the financial aid that the liberal government had granted the Liceo de Chile in the form of scholarships was withdrawn. Mora was therefore forced to close the school.

Mora's thrusts, usually in the form of verse, at the government and Portales grew sharper until the climax was reached in a poem, "Canción de muerte," published in the *Defenso de los militares* of July 12, 1830. The poem was about the execution of three French sergeants, enemies of the Bourbon regime. The conservatives grew indignant, especially over the refrain which they considered a flagrant excitation to revolt:

Cantemos la libertad  
que al tirano desespere,  
pues quien por su patria muere  
logra un eterno vivir.

The "tirano" said when he read it: "El poetastro quiere revolver la piscina. Ya que no puede inquietar a los generales y coroneles, pretende sublevar a los sargentos."<sup>17</sup>

Portales was not the type to tolerate such an attack or brook any

<sup>16</sup> Ricardo A. Latcham, "Las ideas del movimiento literario de 1842," *Atenas*, LXVIII (1942), p. 52.

<sup>17</sup> Miguel Luis Amunátegui, *La alborada poética en Chile después del 18 de setiembre de 1810* (Santiago de Chile: Imp. Nacional, 1892), p. 450.

interference with his ultimate plans. Hence on February 13, 1831, Mora was imprisoned and soon deported.<sup>18</sup>

In 1834 the Colegio de Santiago closed because of the lack of funds. At this point advanced education in Chile was absorbed by the Instituto Nacional. Bello, nevertheless, continued to train and stimulate the youth of Chile by giving private lessons in his home. He offered courses in grammar, Spanish literature, and law. The study in grammar was a complete course in philology and historical grammar. It is fitting to mention here Bello's attitude toward Latin. In 1834 José Miguel Infante in the *Valdiviano Federal* condemned the teaching of Latin. Bello defended it by saying that Latin was only for those who had the will to study it.

As to the law course, Bello had been studying international law for a period of time and conceived in 1831 the idea of writing a book on the subject. He began by dictating to students who came to his home extracts of the work, based mainly upon the books of Jeremy Bentham. Bello tried to make these social doctrines concise, saying that if they were not clear to the students without explanation, he was sure that they would understand them later when as lawyers or public men they would deal with international questions. The book, *Principios de derecho de gentes*<sup>19</sup> was published in 1832, and in 1834 the Instituto Nacional gave the first course in international law, using Bello's book as a text.

Errázuriz, an adverse critic of Bello, writes of him:

. . . estaba ligado por más de un vínculo al pasado español. Había servido en 1830 con decisión y fuego ajenos a su carácter, la causa de los pelucones, y este antecedente, unido a las tendencias de su espíritu, hacían de él un auxiliar precioso para un gobierno que deseaba con sinceridad estimular el cultivo de las letras, sin favorecer por eso la audacia y las curiosidades del pensamiento. La juventud no aprendió, bajo su dirección, a darse cuenta de la razón de ser de las cosas o a investigar la legitimidad de los sucesos y fenómenos del mundo moral y político; pero se acostumbró al buen método, al estudio y a la investigación histórica, y adquirió nociones elementales de las ciencias y un estilo correcto y elegante.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup>In Lima, Mora established a new school, the Ateneo del Perú, where he taught law. From Peru he gave full vent to his wrath. He held a grievance against Portales, it is true, but not against the nation which had given him citizenship. Yet he took his irritation out on Chile in general, calling the country the "Beocia americana." Pedro Chapuis was also exiled to Peru about the same time.

<sup>19</sup>In the second edition (1844) the title was changed to *Principios de derecho internacional*.

<sup>20</sup>Isidoro Errázuriz, *Historia de la administración Errázuriz* (Santiago, Chile: Dirección General de Prisiones, 1935), p. 233.

Yet this very *método, estudio, investigación histórica* were invaluable. Bello sought to avoid in the cultural world what had happened to Chile in the realm of politics where civil rights had been prematurely thrust upon the people. Bello wished to hold literature in check until writers were mature enough to function. Meanwhile, these writers were to be carefully trained.

Bello realized that more than anything else Chile needed education. To him, the education of a people was, as he stated later in the *Araucano* of May 6 and 13, 1836, the essential factor of stability and progress since it raised the moral level of states and individuals. In 1831, articles in the *Araucano* concerning general public instruction came fast. In the July 30 issue, for example, Bello proposed the creation of a museum of natural history; in the August 6 issue, the utility of a special course in chemistry directed toward the industry and agriculture of Chile; and in the December 31 issue, the establishment of Sunday classes to teach the poor to read, and the printing of inexpensive books for this purpose.

The following year, in the *Araucano* of January 21, 1832, Bello criticized the time allotted to devotions in the schedule of the school systems. Prayers consumed as much time as regular studies. Although he had the deepest respect for religion, Bello thought that the number of hours devoted to religious exercises was out of proportion. He was promptly called by some the *corruptor de la juventud y el propagador de la irreligión*.<sup>21</sup>

During this period, whereas censorship of books in Chile had always been strict, in 1832 it reached the incredible extreme of banning three copies of Madame de Stael's *Dolphine* and one copy of Vattel's *Le droit des gens*.<sup>22</sup> Bello's first article on censorship, in the *Araucano* of April 12, 1832, was instrumental in the government's placing him on the censorship committee with Mariano Egaña and Ventura Marín. A month later, in the *Araucano* of May 10, Bello asked for the complete abolition of censorship and the free importation of books. The article brought no results and he published a similar article on October 3. This, too, was unsuccessful. In the November 23 issue of the *Araucano* Bello bitterly lamented that on the list of prohibited books were *L'esprit des lois* (Montesquieu); Atenor

<sup>21</sup>Miguel Luis Amunátegui, *Vida de don Andrés Bello*, (Santiago, Chile: Pedro G. Ramírez, 1882), p. 389.

<sup>22</sup>It is to be remembered that in his capacity of adviser to the government, Bello was the author of many important laws, or took part in drafting them. Legal books were not only of interest to him but also a necessity.

and *Eusebio* (Montengon); *Belisaire* (Marmontel); *L'essai sur les moeurs* (Voltaire); and *Historia de la inquisición* (Llorente).<sup>23</sup>

Much in advance of his time, Bello advocated a primary educational program (reading, writing, catechism, Spanish grammar, and arithmetic) which he outlined in a series of articles in the *Araucano* from August 5 through August 12. This program has varied little since that time.

In 1831 Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, the second foreigner to contribute to the development of Chilean education, entered Chile temporarily. The background and education of this "gaucho of letters" were completely different from the formal classic training of Bello. In the Argentine after 1810 there arose with the ideas of independence and liberty an equal desire to further education. Into this atmosphere Sarmiento was born on February 15, 1811, to humble parents in San Juan de la Frontera, capital of the province of San Juan. Sarmiento completed all of the courses offered by the newly-founded Escuela de la Patria in San Juan, and since his parents could not afford to send him to a secondary school in a different province, he continued to attend the school until it was closed in 1825.

Although Sarmiento, with his excellent scholastic record, was more than entitled to receive a scholarship in Buenos Aires, he did not receive one. Soon, however, he was taken into the home of presbyter José de Oro Albarracín, a distinguished and cultured priest who was a distant relative, who taught him Latin, geography and religion. Shortly thereafter, Oro was forced to go into exile and Sarmiento followed him in 1826 to San Francisco de Monte, a miserable village in the northern section of the province of San Luis.

In 1827 Sarmiento returned to San Juan, which at that time was under the governorship of a Chilean, José Antonio Sánchez, who was arranging to send Sarmiento to the Colegio de Ciencias Morales in Buenos Aires at the province's expense. Through a change of political fortunes, however, Sanchez was replaced and Sarmiento again lost his chance at a scholarship.

In 1831, after the defeat of the Unitarians on whose behalf Sarmiento had been active, he and his father emigrated to Chile where Sarmiento taught school in Santa Rosa de los Andes. His educational innovations were applauded by some but criticized by others, among whom was the governor of the province. Sarmiento thus lost his position and moved to Pocuro to continue his teaching. In 1833 he was a clerk in Valparaíso

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<sup>23</sup>It was not until almost a half century later that Miguel Luis Amunátegui succeeded in suppressing censorship.

and while there paid a professor to teach him to read and translate English. During this period the mines in northern Chile were booming and Sarmiento moved on to Copiapó and then to Chañarcillo. In 1834, in Chañarcillo, he attempted his first literary essay, a paper dealing with a colonization project in lands adjacent to the Colorado River. By 1836, Sarmiento had returned to the Argentine, where he taught drawing and became a *tinterillo*.

In November, 1840, Argentina now being completely under the domination of the dictator Rosas, Sarmiento was once again forced to flee to Chile after a period devoted to directing a *colegio*, writing and editing a newspaper, and study of French theorists. While en route to Chile, at a place called Los Baños, Sarmiento wrote on some stones along the highway Fortoul's phrase, "On ne tue point les idées," which he later translated so graphically into Spanish as "Las ideas no se degüellan."<sup>24</sup>

#### CHILE IN 1841-1842

When Sarmiento arrived in Santiago in 1841, Chile, as noted previously, was prospering materially. Among the organizations functioning at that time which played a part in the development of education in Chile was the Sociedad de Agricultura y Colonización, established in 1839. This society founded a publication, *El Agricultor* and opened the Quinta Normal de Agricultura the same year. During this period, too, serious attention was paid to the study of mining. The famous exiled Polish scientist, Ignacio Domeyko, had been employed in 1839 to teach classes in chemistry and mining at the Liceo de Coquimbo, and in 1841 he was made *Perito Facultativo* (consultant professor) of mining.

Also in 1841 an outstanding European educator, Antonio Vendel-Heyl, was literally washed ashore at Valparaíso. Vendel-Heyl left France in 1840 on the *Oriental*, a *buque-escuela* on which he was director of the young men. The ship was wrecked off the coast of Valparaíso and Vendel-Heyl was forced to remain in Chile. He became professor of Latin and Greek at the Instituto Nacional.<sup>25</sup>

The French scientist Claudio Gay<sup>26</sup> returned to Santiago in 1841 after

<sup>24</sup>Jose Guillermo Guerra, *Sarmiento - Su vida i sus obras*, Santiago de Chile, Imprenta Elzeviriana, 1901, p. 25.

<sup>25</sup>In 1842 Vendel-Heyl became professor of Greek and Latin at the University of Chile. He died in Santiago in 1854.

<sup>26</sup>Claudio Gay had been employed to teach in the *Liceo* that Chapuis endeavored to establish in Santiago in 1829. Due to the lack of equipment, Gay was reduced to giving lessons in descriptive geography. Therefore he left the profession of teaching and accepted a contract (September 14, 1830) from the government of Chile

having completed the research work for his *Historia física y política de Chile*.

During 1841 plans to found a university were taking more definite shape. By presidential decree in 1839 the University of San Felipe had been dissolved and the faculty told that members would retain their titles and positions in the new university. Politically, being a presidential year, it was not a favorable time for the organization of a university. Nonetheless, Bello was instructed to prepare the basic plans. These he presented on July 26, 1841, to a committee and sent them to the legislature for acceptance.

By 1842 the students who had formed their literary criteria under Bello were eager to attempt a concerted effort in the intellectual field. As a result, these young men formed a literary society, the *Sociedad Literaria*, and undertook the publication of a review.

This was not the first attempt to organize a literary society and to publish a literary review. Mention has previously been made of Lozier's review, *Redactor de la Educación*. Later came the *Mercurio Chileno*, published from April 1, 1828 to July 15, 1829, and edited by Mora and Passamán. While this publication was not sponsored by a society and did not contain solely literary articles, the journal was another step toward a purely literary publication. In 1839 the professors of the Instituto Nacional organized a scholarly society, taking as a model the society founded by Lozier in 1826. Membership consisted of professors of the Instituto Nacional, presided over by the rector. The aim of the society was to present original papers or translations.<sup>27</sup> From this society sprang an historical society, formed with the sole object of assembling all the docu-

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to make a scientific study of the topography and products of the soil. On November 15, 1841, Gay was granted Chilean citizenship as a reward for his services, 6,000 pesos, government aid for the publication of his material, and a promise of a richer reimbursement when the work was finished. When completed (1855) the work consisted of 28 volumes: volumes 1-8 *Historia*; volumes 9-10, *Documentos de historia*; volumes 11-18, *Botánica* (exquisite and accurate drawings in color accompany this); volumes 19-20, *Agricultura*; volumes 21-28, *Zoología*; plus the *Atlas de la historia física y política de Chile* in two volumes.

<sup>27</sup>Only a few of the papers presented still exist. The first one was by a Tomás Zontona — a comparison of the educational institutions of the United States with those of Latin America, attributing Latin American political defects to a lack of education. On May 1, a José Miguel Barriga read a paper on general observations of the progress and utility of mathematics; a José Vicente Bustillos presented on June 26 a paper on the importance of the study of the natural sciences; and on July 30, Andrés Antonio de Corbea presented to the society a paper on the computation of probabilities. See Domingo Amunátegui Solar, *El Instituto Nacional bajo Antonio Varas — 1835-1845* (Santiago de Chile: Imp. Cervantes, 1891), p. 99.



ments and information possible concerning the history of Chile. Very little information concerning this group survives. The minutes of the last meeting are dated August 24, 1841.

These societies, especially the last two, were important for two reasons. They revealed that public instruction had taken root in Chilean soil, and they were the forerunners of the important literary society of 1842.<sup>28</sup>

The *Sociedad Literaria* of 1842 was composed of young men who were about to complete their studies in the Instituto Nacional. None of them was over twenty-five. Their object was to write, translate, study, and confer, so that they might prepare themselves for the publication of a literary review that was to be a center of intellectual activity and a medium for diffusing their ideas. The society was formed just after the opening of the 1842 classes. In March, the *Sociedad Literaria* had selected as its director Lastarria, one of the most outstanding professors, who since 1839 had been brilliantly conducting classes in law, and who gained the reputation of being a liberal. Lastarria was informed of his election on March 17, but he did not become a member of the society until May 3. On that date he gave a memorable inaugural address, a complete program for literary regeneration, and one designed to deal a death blow to the conservatives of literature.

While there were many reforms in all branches of education in Chile in 1842, one must bear in mind that numerous plans to improve facilities for education had been made previous to that date. In 1842 secondary education, as in the colonial period, still consisted of two branches of study — Latin and philosophy. Diego Barros Arana said of those being graduated from the colegios in 1842:

El joven que salía del colegio después de terminar los estudios secundarios, carecía de todos los conocimientos aprovechables en la carrera de la vida, y de los que tienden al desarrollo de la inteligencia. Lo que entonces se llamaba filosofía, no formaba ciertamente una excepción a esta observación general sobre aquella enseñanza. Los pocos hombres que por sus conocimientos, salían de ese marco estrecho, los habían adquirido en la lectura, o en la enseñanza privada, como la que daba Andrés Bello en su casa a un reducido número de jóvenes.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup>Outside of Santiago, the only other city attempting to organize a similar society was Concepción, where the *Asociación Instructiva* was founded in 1842.

<sup>29</sup>Diego Barros Arana, *Un Decenio de la historia de Chile — 1841-1851* (Obras completas, Tomo XIV, 2 vols.; Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Litografía i Encuadernación "Barcelona," 1913), I, pp. 328-329.



Late in 1842, the publication of an article on secondary education brought about reforms. The author of the article was Ignacio Domeyko, who wrote the paper while vacationing in Santiago. Among his suggestions was a plan for a course of study that included required subjects such as Spanish grammar and literature, a modern language, history, mathematics, and science. The Chilean Minister of War, pleased with Domeyko's recommendations, had the paper published in the *Semanario de Santiago* on December 29, 1842, and on January 5, 1843. Manuel Montt, Minister of Public Instruction, accepted the general plan proposed by Domeyko, and it became law on February 25, 1843.

The next step in education was the founding of the Escuela Normal de Chile. To understand the creation of the normal school, it is first necessary to review briefly the primary schools. It will be recalled that when the government in September, 1830, returned the property that had been confiscated from the convents and monasteries, the latter were compelled by law to open primary schools. Ten years later the clergy were ordered to open Sunday schools. Neither plan proved successful. In 1842, there were only fifty-six primary schools in the whole republic, and they were in the worst condition imaginable.

One obstacle to the improvement of elementary education was the total lack of qualified teachers. The knowledge of the majority of the teachers did not go beyond the ability to read and write.

On July 28, 1841, a law was passed granting ten thousand pesos for the establishment of primary schools and the foundation of a normal school. To make the normal school a reality Montt made good use of Sarmiento's knowledge of public instruction by commissioning him to draft a plan of studies, rules, regulations, and a decree by which the institution could be founded.

Sarmiento was equal to the assignment. Parallel with his journalistic work, he had been carrying on another more modest but no less fruitful task in the field of education. Ever since his arrival, he had taught and worked toward the improvement of education. When he first came to Santiago, he taught reading in the Colegio de Zapata. There he improved the course by using a new text.<sup>30</sup> He also wrote an educational booklet entitled *Análisis de las cartillas, silabarios y otros métodos de lectura conocidos y practicados en Chile*, which was a résumé of his study for the government on the selection of a reading textbook. Many of Sar-

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<sup>30</sup>Sarmiento had a reprint made of the *Método de lectura en quince cuadros*, a book published a few years previously by Juan Manuel Bonifaz, a Spanish educator with advanced ideas.

miento's newspaper columns concerned the necessity of Sunday schools for adults, the education of women, the creation of a normal school, etc.

On January 18, 1842, the normal school for the teachers of Chile was established by law. It was the first of its kind in Latin America, and only a few years younger than the oldest similar institution in the United States.<sup>31</sup> Sarmiento was made director with one assistant. Here, at last, he could expand his advanced although not original ideas.<sup>32</sup>

In preparing plans for the establishment of the university, the committee tried to incorporate into one body two phases of education: the division for instruction (*docente*), which was to confer degrees and inspect and direct public teaching; and the academic, whose work was to consist in the furthering of sciences and letters. The university was modelled after French institutions and was divided into five schools: philosophy and humanities, law, physical science and mathematics, medicine, and theology. The similarity to French institutions was only in the number of schools and not in the distribution of courses in each academic school. Each school of theology was to have forty members who were to form a faculty of sacred sciences and who were to have special prerogatives.

According to the plan of organization, the government would appoint initially the complete staff. Thereafter, selection would be made by the president of Chile from three names presented by the complete staff of a school. Election of members of the faculty had no value without formal appointment by the president of Chile.

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<sup>31</sup>The first normal schools in the United States were private schools, appearing as early as the 1820's and 1830's. The first state normal school was established in 1839 at Lexington, Massachusetts.

<sup>32</sup>To teach grammar, Sarmiento dictated lessons based on theories similar to those in Bello's *Gramática castellana* (Published in 1847), and, to teach reading he substituted for the old and cumbersome spelling method the syllabic method. In 1844, he translated, from French sources, readings for children that he called *Conciencia de un niño* and *Vida de Jesucristo*. An important contribution to education was his *Método de lectura gradual* which was adopted for the nation by law in 1845. The Liceo de Santiago, founded in 1842 by the Argentine José Antonio Ortiz, became the property of Sarmiento and Vicente Fidel López who gave the school such an independent orientation that they were forced to close it in 1844. In 1843 Sarmiento was appointed to the faculty of the University of Chile. In 1845 he was commissioned by Chile to make a study of European schools. He visited France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, England, and the United States. The visit to the United States in 1847 was brief but changed the course of Sarmiento's ideas. From then on, he was influenced not by France but by the United States. In 1855 he left Chile to return to the Argentine where his activities centered around politics and education.

It was decreed that there would be a formal session of the university once a year, attended by the *patrono* and *vice-patrono*, that is, the president of Chile and the minister of public instruction. At this meeting there were to be reports on the accomplishments of the university, and awards for various literary contests. In addition, one of the faculty members, appointed by the rector, was to read a paper on some phase of the history of Chile.

The Senate reduced the number of faculty members of the school of theology from forty to thirty, as was the case in the other schools, and added an article whereby any employee of the university could be removed at the discretion of the *patrono*. On November 19, 1842, the law establishing the University of Chile was passed and signed by the president.

Appointment of personnel was difficult because there were so few people qualified to teach courses in *belles lettres*, mathematics, physics, and medicine. Hence the government appointed only eighty-four out of a possible hundred and fifty, reserving the right to add to the staff later. The eighty-four appointments were distributed in this manner: eight in the school of medicine; twelve in mathematics and science; nineteen in humanities; twenty-two in law; and twenty-three in theology. The eighty-four professors appointed included the twenty-three doctors from the University of San Felipe, and they were distributed almost evenly, half in the school of theology and half in law.

To the above appointments were added those of the rector, a general secretary, and five deans with corresponding secretaries.<sup>33</sup> There were two noteworthy candidates for the position of rector, Mariano Egaña and Andrés Bello. In Egaña's favor were the facts that he was a Chilean by birth, a doctor, and a lawyer. Bello lacked these three qualifications but had others that far outweighed them. Although he held no advanced degrees, his literary ability and research work were unchallenged. As to law, he was permitted to practise although he had pursued no formal law courses in Chile and therefore held no title. Yet it is to be recalled that it was he who was the author of the civil code which with minor changes still stands today. Also to his credit were many years of

<sup>33</sup>In addition to the rector, the following staff was appointed: Secretary General, Salvador Sanfuentes; Dean of the School of Theology, Rafael Valentín Valdivieso, and Secretary, Justo Donoso; Dean of the Law School, Mariano Egaña, and Secretary, Manuel María Güemes; Dean of the School of Medicine, Lorenzo Gasie, and Secretary, Francisco Javier Tocornal; Dean of the School of Physical Sciences and Mathematics, Andrés Antonio de Corbea, and Secretary, Ignacio Domeyko; and Dean of the School of Humanities, Miguel de la Barra, and Secretary, Antonio García Reyes.

successful teaching. In short, he possessed a breadth of vision that came from manifold interests and a wealth of experience in each field. So, even though Mariano Egaña was one of the outstanding men of the government party and son of the well known Juan Egaña, President Montt selected Andrés Bello because he judged him more capable and of greater learning.

Previous to the founding of the University of Chile, Bello dominated the field of law and letters. As rector he continued to be the guiding element in the new university. Law courses with their colonial tradition were reorganized, and through Bello's influence widened their sphere. As to letters, the literary movement in which Bello took such an active part was to be channeled into more permanent form and was to receive a more vital stimulus than the *Sociedad Literaria* could give it. The University of Chile took control, so to speak, of the literary movement of 1842, thus furthering the development of various forms of nascent literature. The novel, poetry, and prose all thrived under the guidance of the university. But no *genre* of Chilean literature of this period developed as the study of history did. It was the true creation of the university, reaching the point where it became the most solid of all courses. Menéndez y Pelayo says:

De la Universidad salieron historiógrafos, investigadores, gramáticos, economistas y sociólogos, más bien que poetas. El carácter del pueblo chileno, como el de sus progenitores, vascogados en gran parte, es positivo, práctico, sesudo, poco inclinado a idealidades.<sup>34</sup>

Positive and practical were two outstanding attributes of the men who had so much to do with the founding of the university—Mariano Egaña, President Bulnes, and Manuel Montt, Minister of Public Instruction. Without discrediting the merits of those collaborators, tribute must be paid to Bello because of his influence, tenacity, constructive spirit, diplomacy, and, more than anything else, his recognized intellectual superiority. The university indeed owed much to Egaña, Bulnes, and Montt, but Bello was its real founder. An outsider, schooled in the classics in Venezuela and enriched by contacts with Anglo-Saxon and French learning during his stay in England, he was devoid of local prejudices. His cosmopolitanism, breadth of vision, and eclecticism inspired the establishment of the University of Chile, directed its foundation, and guided its first steps until the institution attained maturity and magnitude of influence.

<sup>34</sup>Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, *Antología de poetas hispano-americanos*, (Tomo IV, Madrid: "Sucesores de Rivadeneyra," 1895), p. lxxv.

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# PERU MOVES ONTO THE IRON AND STEEL MAP OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

C. Langdon White and Gary Chenkin

On April 21, 1958, Peru joined Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, and Chile to bring to five the number of Latin American nations possessing integrated steel mills.<sup>1</sup> Whether these countries should engage in heavy industry is beside the point; they are determined to make iron and steel, for they fervently believe that an iron and steel industry is the inevitable harbinger of progress.<sup>2</sup> There is simultaneously a belief that the export of raw materials and the import of manufactured goods implies "colonial" status. Sensitive national pride rebels against the thought that raw materials producers are "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the industrially-advanced countries.<sup>3</sup>

In the case of Peru, five key goals appear to epitomize the benefits envisaged in the mills of Chimbote:

1. Reduction and eventual elimination of heavy payments for imported steel, with consequent improvement in the nation's foreign-exchange position;
2. Freedom from dependence upon foreign sources of supply which had failed to provide Peru with sufficient steel during periods, beginning in 1914, of war, depression, and interna-

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<sup>1</sup>An integrated steel plant is one whose facilities cover the whole gamut of steel-making operations from the mining and quarrying of raw materials to the manufacture of finished products for the consumer.

<sup>2</sup>See White, C. Langdon, "Industrialization: A Panacea for Underdeveloped Nations?", *Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers*, Vol. 17, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Staley, Eugene, *The Future of Underdeveloped Countries*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954, p. 23.



tional tension. In short, Peru is to emerge from "economic colonialism", and Peruvians are convinced that she can;

3. Stimulation of secondary steel-using industries. (The primary iron and steel industry is called a "seed industry.");

4. Elevation of the national level of living through new jobs, higher production, expanded markets, and increased economic stability. Included in this category is the hope and belief that the new iron and steel industry will culminate in the creation of a middle class to bridge the unhealthy gap between the very rich and the very poor;<sup>4</sup>

5. The purely psychological reason – the belief that only manufacturing peoples are "free" peoples.<sup>5</sup>

All five of these hopes are motivated by the new "revolution of rising expectations"<sup>6</sup> that is sweeping over the almost 2 billion people who dwell in the so-called underdeveloped lands of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. These peoples, who for countless centuries existed under miserable living conditions, accepting the brutal fact that nothing could be done to alter their lot, now insist upon a better life. They believe that poverty, illiteracy, disease, low life expectancy at birth, and other ills are not inevitable.

Since their countries have been dominated by agriculture, they have a burning desire to switch from agrarianism, which they associate with debasement and a low level of living, to industrialism, which to them means progress and a better way of life. They are determined to industrialize, even to creating an iron and steel industry, whether economic or not.<sup>7</sup>

Presumably in the Free World the basic function of the ordinary steel plant is to make a profit; Chimbote must lead Peru toward self-sufficiency and incarnate a vision of progress. Even where the profit motive is subordinated as a result of autarchy, a basic industry must at least meet minimum standards of efficiency or risk enslaving the economy which it

<sup>4</sup>Hall, Maurice A. and Rogow, Arnold A., "Problems of Industrialization in Latin America", *Inter-American Economic Affairs*, Vol. IV, winter, 1950, pp. 44-56.

<sup>5</sup>White, C. Langdon and Alderson, Donald J., "Industrialization: Panacea for Latin America?", *Journal of Geography*, Vol. LVI, October, 1957, pp. 325-332.

<sup>6</sup>Murden, F.D., "Underdeveloped Lands: Revolution of Rising Expectations", *Foreign Policy Association: Headline Series*, No. 119, 1956.

<sup>7</sup>There are many examples of underdeveloped nations' embarking upon ambitious projects on the basis of no more than the general desire to industrialize and with almost no information or background of the many technical, social, and economic data upon which the success of such projects depends. If industrialization is pushed too fast, it invariably leads to a shortage of consumer goods, to agricultural distress, to inflation, and to inability to compete in world markets. See Vaughan, Ernest H., *A Study of the Development of National Steel Plants in Selected Latin American Countries*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Austin: University of Texas, January 19, 1955.

seeks to liberate. It is, therefore, appropriate to examine the foundations of the Peruvian iron and steel industry to ascertain whether it can compete with foreign supplies within its own market in price, volume, and quality.<sup>8</sup>

Geographic and human resources must be skillfully intermeshed if an integrated metallurgical industry is to prosper. Raw materials, transportation, markets, water supply, technical facilities, know-how, and capital are the chief counters in the arithmetic of iron and steel. Political and social conditions may also signify the difference between success and failure.

#### CHIMBOTE: PERU'S IRON AND STEEL CENTER

Peru's integrated iron and steel plant, the nation's first venture in heavy industry, is located at Chimbote, which until the 1940's was nothing more than a sleepy farming and fishing village of about 1,000 inhabitants. In this respect it resembled scores of other towns and villages in coastal Peru. Chimbote is located in the Department of Ancash, about 260 miles north of Lima and Callo. Capital of Peru's "TVA" and site of its steel plant, Chimbote today has a population exceeding 50,000 persons and ranks as one of the nation's fastest-growing cities. Chimbote has several unique advantages over sister coastal settlements for an iron and steel mill:

1. It lies on what is regarded as the finest natural harbor in the 1,400 miles of Peruvian coastline and this is important since the iron ore must be delivered approximately 500 miles by vessel. Along this emergent coast there is a dearth of good natural harbors.
2. There is high-grade coal in the Santa Valley and from the mines rail transportation is available to Chimbote.
3. In Cajón del Pato, 80 miles up the Santa River from Chimbote, is one of Peru's major hydro-electric installations.
4. Of the 52 rivers that make their way from the Andes to the Pacific across the 1,400 miles of desert (north to south), the Santa is one of the largest and one of the few which contains water throughout the year and which actually reaches the Pacific Ocean. In many ways it is the *Costa's* most important river. This is particularly germane to the metallurgical industry, which is a "hog" for water (see page 382).

Everything considered, Chimbote is undoubtedly the best location in Peru for the national iron and steel industry. The major weakness is that

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<sup>8</sup>Ability to compete is not always a determining factor in Latin American industrialization.

manufacture here involves two long hauls — iron ore from Marcona to Chimbote and steel from Chimbote to Callao-Lima. Fortunately, however, water transportation is economical. Since steel is a "seed industry", it may spawn numerous steel-consuming industries in the Chimbote area.

#### THE ASSEMBLY OF RAW MATERIALS AT CHIMBOTE

The *ideal* site for making iron and steel is one that is relatively close to all raw materials and to consuming markets and at the same time is well served by transportation, including that by water. It should also have ample room for expansion, for the disposal of waste, and it should have access to an enormous supply of cold, soft water at reasonable cost. Seldom does a location anywhere on earth meet all these conditions. Even though Chimbote must haul its iron ore and steel long distances, it is regarded as a good location. Its assembly cost is the second lowest among all Latin American iron-and-steel-making areas and lower than that at Sparrows Point, Maryland, America's largest and sole integrated plant on tidewater.<sup>9</sup>

*Iron ore.* Chief source of ore for Chimbote is the relatively-new mining project at Marcona, which lies 500 miles to the south and about 15 miles inland from the port of San Juan, from which the ore is shipped after a short haul from the mine.

These ore deposits, consisting of hematite and limonite in the upper levels and of magnetite in the lower ones, contains an estimated reserve of 180 million net tons, which gives Peru the number seven spot in reserves among the 20 Latin American states.<sup>10</sup> Today, Peru ranks high among Latin American nations in both iron ore production and exports. In 1957, 3,579,456 metric tons of iron ore were exported, chiefly to the United States and Japan.<sup>11</sup>

The ore being shipped is high grade, averaging about 60 per cent metallic iron. It contains almost no moisture and is low enough in sulfur and phosphorous for blast furnace use. The reserve of direct shipping ores, however, is somewhat limited. Nonetheless, millions of tons of lower-grade ores have been developed by drilling and test pits and a beneficiation plant for handling these ores has been constructed.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup>United Nations, *A Study of the Iron and Steel Industry in Latin America*, New York, 1954, Vol. 11G3, p. 42.

<sup>10</sup>Price, John D., *Some Aspects of Latin American Coal Reserves*. Published by the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, Inc., New York, 1953.

<sup>11</sup>U. S. Bureau of Mines, *Mineral Trade Notes*, Vol. 47, August, 1958, p. 10.

<sup>12</sup>Beneficiation of ore simply means improvement and concentration of the iron-bearing minerals. It produces a concentrate of high iron content, enabling the operators to economize on shipping charges.

The open-cut method of mining is employed, the overburden being drilled and blasted. Power shovels then scoop up the ore and load it into trucks which deliver it to the port over a heavy-duty highway.

The desert is particularly arid here and there is no fresh water. Accordingly, sea water is distilled — 2,400 gallons per hour.

Originally, it was believed that the Santa Corporation would operate the mine, but for financial reasons it discovered that it could not do so. Accordingly, it invited an American corporation to exploit the deposit. This corporation, the Marcona Mining Company, pays royalties to the Santa Corporation on ore mined and exported.

Scrap, too, is utilized. In fact, the Peruvian government now prohibits the export of scrap iron and scrap steel as a means of insuring an adequate supply of this valuable material for Chimbote, whose plant uses about 15,000 tons per year.

Coal. Chimbote is particularly fortunate with relation to coal for reasonably large and very high-grade deposits lie about 65 miles up the Santa Valley. With reserves exceeding 4 billion tons, Peru ranks second among Latin American nations in coal reserves. The coal ranges from high-volatile bituminous to anthracite. It has good washability characteristics, but is not suitable for coking unless mixed with asphalt.

The Chimbote mill is unique, however, in that it does not depend upon coal (coke) fed blast furnaces for its pig iron, but operates on the basis of the Tysland-Hole electric reduction process. Traditionally, iron ore is converted into pig iron in blast furnaces with coke made from coal as the reducing agent. In coal-poor countries, e.g., Sweden, Norway, Italy, Canada, and Venezuela, electricity is used to convert iron ore into pig iron. There are only a score or so of such pig-iron furnaces in the world, chiefly in Europe.

Peru is the first country in Latin America to utilize the electric furnace for this purpose. The Chimbote plant has two such furnaces, as well as two electric steel furnaces.<sup>13</sup> A plant of this type is expensive both to construct and to operate.<sup>14</sup>

Since the world iron and steel industry has been virtually tied to convenient supplies of coking coal, the large fabricators have for many

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<sup>13</sup>U.S. Bureau of Mines, *Mineral Trade Notes*, Vol. 46, June, 1958, p. 21.

<sup>14</sup>Müller, B.M., "Discussion on the Paper—Features from the Planning of an Electric Smelting Plant for Pig Iron at Mo i Rana", *Journal of Iron and Steel Institute*, Vol. 164, February, 1950, pp. 170-171; and Christiansen, H., "A Brief History of Electric Pig Iron Smelting in Norway", *Journal of the Iron and Steel Institute*, Vol. 162, May, 1949, pp. 11-12.

years utilized their best technological talent and enormous financial resources to try to bypass the coke-operated blast furnace, which is undeniably inefficient, costly to operate, and has still other drawbacks. To date, however, the blast furnace continues to dominate iron-making.

Santa Valley anthracite, which is processed in a German-designed coke plant, is used as a reducing agent.<sup>15</sup>

*Limestone.* This last of the trio of raw materials for iron-making is seldom a problem anywhere, since it is widely-distributed. Deposits of sufficiently-good quality lie in the Santa Valley not far from Chimbote.

#### HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER

The Santa River is a major source of hydro power in coastal Peru. Approximately 80 miles inland from Chimbote lies the famous Cajón del Pato, through which the Santa rushes and falls before reaching the coast. It falls 1,400 feet in 6 miles, 5,000 feet to sea level in 80 miles.

An initial 25,000 KW of electricity was made available early in 1958; this amount can be increased to 150,000 KW as the need for power increases. The energy is produced at low cost (less than 1 cent U. S. per kwh) and distributed economically because of the short distance to Chimbote.

#### WATER

Since the iron and steel industry is a "hog" for water, this resource is a major factor in the location of a plant.<sup>16</sup> An integrated mill in the United States may use (circulate, not consume) as many as 13 billion gallons per day for cooling, for quenching coke, and for disposing of waste. A single blast furnace may use as much water in a day as a city of 30,000 inhabitants. Some plants use as many as 65,000 gallons of water to make a single ton of finished steel. Only about 2 per cent or 1,000 gallons of this amount, however, is not re-used.

As noted earlier, the Santa is one of the largest rivers in coastal Peru, and has one of the steadiest flows. This is extremely important in a desert.

#### THE PLANT AT CHIMBOTE

The plant was planned by French engineers, and chiefly, but not entirely, built in France largely with French capital. Peru failed to secure United States' financing for the mill after engineers advised against con-

<sup>15</sup>U.S. Bureau of Mines, *Mineral Trade Notes*, Vol. 46, June, 1958, p. 21.

<sup>16</sup>White, C. Langdon, "Water — Neglected Factor in the Geographic Literature of Iron and Steel", *The Geographical Review*, Vol. XLVII, October, 1957, pp. 463-489.

struction. Capital was a major need from inception to completion and undoubtedly will continue to be into the distant future.

Production is about 60,000 tons per annum; total Peruvian requirements are placed at 200,000 tons or 134,000 tons more than Chimbote's capacity.

The steel mill is equipped to make different types of bars, rods, plates, and galvanized sheets. It is reported that this output constitutes a saving of about \$7,250,000 U. S. in exchange.

#### PERU'S MARKET FOR STEEL

Easy access to a large market is generally regarded as the most important single factor in locating a new iron and steel plant.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, Peru's market, like that of her sister republics, Chile and Colombia, is small, for Peru has a total population of only about ten million. Moreover, this population is a poor one: in 1949, the per capita annual wage was only \$100;<sup>18</sup> although it had risen during the following six years, in 1955, it stood at only about \$140.<sup>19</sup> Thus, Peru is undeniably an under-developed country. Moreover, Peru is predominantly agricultural, it being estimated that about 85 per cent of the population is directly or indirectly dependent upon agriculture. Yet, even most of the farmers are subsistence farmers who buy and sell almost nothing. Thousands of mountain Indians are positively outside a money economy. Of the approximately ten million inhabitants, only one-third *produce and consume*; the other two-thirds only consume.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, Peru's market for steel is a limited one. For such a mill as that at Chimbote to prosper would necessitate its operating 24 hours per day, 365 days of the year. Moreover, the variety of steel products required is so great in proportion to the comparatively-limited total demand that higher operating costs are unavoidable. Where the size and nature of the market do not permit production at the optimum level, high unit costs inevitably follow. Taking Latin America as a whole, per capita steel consumption is only one-sixth that of Western Europe and only one-thirtieth that of the United States.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Harris, Chancy D., "The Market as a Factor in the Localization of Industry in the United States", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. XLIV, December, 1954, pp. 316-319.

<sup>18</sup>Chase National Bank, "Industrialization", *Latin-American Business Highlights*, December, 1952, p. 3.

<sup>19</sup>Davenport, John, "Why Peru Pulls Dollars", *Fortune*, Vol. 54, November, 1956, p. 131.

<sup>20</sup>*Noticias*, Vol. XIV, No. 37, week ending September 16, 1958, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup>Chase National Bank, "Iron and Steel", *Latin American Business Highlights*, December, 1956, p. 2.



Is the cost of steel to domestic consumers in Latin America lower than the cost of imported steel? Unfortunately, there are no overall statistics that measure steel prices paid by consumers. Available evidence, however, supports the view that local production, even with a protective tariff, does not yield savings to steel users in any of the Latin American countries. Again, steel output has not attained a volume that permits producers to take full advantage of the economy of large-scale steel production. Thus, Chimbote's annual capacity is only about 60,000 tons of steel or less than one-tenth that of Lone Star near Daingerfield in northeastern Texas, one of the smaller metallurgical centers in the United States.<sup>22</sup>

It is thus apparent that the consumption rate of steel in Peru as elsewhere in Latin America is too small to justify the installation of the type of modern specialized plant capable of taking advantage of all improvements which increase productivity. Peru lacks a *mass* market.

One wonders whether Chimbote's output will be consumed within Peru or whether steel will be bartered with Argentina for meat and cereals? Such an exchange is to be expected.

Peruvian steel cannot be sold on the world market in competition with that of the huge, efficient, and lower-cost operating mills of Belgium-Luxembourg, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and possibly even the United States.

#### TRANSPORTATION

The iron and steel industry is concerned with transportation almost *in toto*, since transport is basal at every stage from the assembly of raw materials to the distribution of fabricated products. Despite the fact that great distances are involved in bringing iron ore to Chimbote and hauling steel to Callao-Lima, Peru is better off transportation-wise than Colombia, Brazil, or Argentina. In Peru's metallurgical industry, water rather than land transportation is utilized.

#### CAPITAL

Few industries require so much capital as that engaged in making iron and steel. A new integrated steel plant costs in excess of \$300 U. S. per ton of capacity for a plant with an annual capacity of not less than 2 million tons, which obviously is most economical to operate. This means that the company must put \$300 U. S. into the integrated plant and working capital to produce a ton of finished steel per year. Looked at in another way and focussing attention upon a specific plant, at the United

<sup>22</sup>The capacity of Sparrows Point, largest producing center in the United States, is 8,200,000 annual ingot tons.



States Steel Corporation's Fairless Works at Morrisville, Pennsylvania, more than \$90,000 U. S. apiece was required to provide each of the approximately 5,000 production workers with tools.<sup>23</sup>

Capital is the one commodity that is particularly scarce in Peru.<sup>24</sup> Little local capital is available for mining and huge manufacturing ventures because of the risks involved. Foreign private capital is reluctant to invest in Latin American countries because of present taxes, exchange controls, and what it considers fiery nationalism. After spending \$20 million U. S. up to 1954, the Santa Corporation needed additional capital. This was available only at the Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas. This capital was guaranteed by royalties and export of Marcona iron ore, by export of anthracite coal to France, and by future steel revenues.

#### LABOR

The scarcity of trained administrative and technical personnel has caused Chimbote to lean heavily upon the assistance of foreign technicians. Such dependence was to be expected in the beginning in pre-industrial Peru. To be sure, promising young men are sent abroad to gain experience in foreign steel mills, but there will be for some time a scarcity of trained and literate labor. Wages are much lower in Peru than in Western Europe and the United States.

#### CONCLUSIONS

It has been pointed out that the manufacturing process in the iron and steel industry is a constant battle against costs: the cost of assembling raw materials at a given place; the costs incident to converting these materials into a product at a given place; and the cost of distributing these products from a given place to other areas. These costs with their ramifications are intrinsic to heavy industry. The total cost, then, of the industrial process is made up of many other costs, several of which have a real variability. Each of the costs may be reduced by knowing the quantitative distribution of that cost.

In the case of Peru as in that of Chile, Colombia, Brazil, and Venezuela, however, it is not fair to evaluate the iron and steel industry exclusively on its economic performance. The national iron and steel industry has also a symbolic role to play in Latin American life. It must serve as a vehicle for non-economic aspirations such as independence and social progress; it must even be a reflection of national strength and

<sup>23</sup>Fairless, Benjamin F., from an address before the Sales Executive Club of New York, February 6, 1951.

<sup>24</sup>In 1957 and 1958, Peru lived beyond its earnings and had both an unfavorable balance of payments and a foreign-exchange deficit.

maturity. There is no precise scale for judging effectiveness in this sphere and it is beyond the scope of this inquiry to devise one. It would seem reasonable to assume, however, that the industry cannot long command acceptance even on symbolic grounds if its economic performance fails to improve.

For those who believe that a national steel industry is justifiable at any price, Chimbote stands as a new El Dorado; for more dispassionate persons, however, the iron and steel plant at the mouth of the Santa is a costly monument to economic nationalism.

The authors, after weighing all arguments pro and con for a domestic iron and steel industry, are convinced that Peru, like her sister republics, with the exception perhaps of Mexico and Brazil, would have been better advised to have had merely a steel mill based on domestic scrap for, as has been noted, in a small-scale plant operation costs per unit of production must of necessity be high and high cost per unit of production means high-cost steel. In fact, competent engineers advised the Peruvian government that a scrap-based plant would be more appropriate.<sup>25</sup> In all probability, it would have been more economical for Peru to have imported her steel from Belgium-Luxembourg or the United Kingdom,<sup>26</sup> which some authorities estimate would cost only one-third as much as Peruvian-made steel.

The authors believe that Peru is not suited to heavy industry. Economic geographic justification positively cannot be found for constructing an integrated plant. Yet, acknowledging Peru's desire to construct such a plant, Chimbote seems to be the most appropriate site.

Peruvian and many Latin American leaders have believed that the process of economic growth is essentially the same as industrialization, and thus far, economic nationalism and autarchy have ruled. Soon, however, these leaders will see that "hot-house" industrialization has many weaknesses. What they may perhaps be forced to consider is that a long period of social and economic change was required to prepare other nations of the West for the advent of their era of heavy industry.

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<sup>25</sup>Hanson's *Latin American Letter*, Washington, D.C., No. 9, May 26, 1945, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup>In openly-competitive lines, European competitors frequently submit bids 20 to 30 per cent below those of United States' companies. Belgium-Luxembourg customarily submits the lowest bids. In 1958, however, the United Kingdom was reputed to have the lowest prices in Europe.

